

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer  
The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer  
The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer  
The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer  
The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer  
The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer  
The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer  
The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer  
The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer  
The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer  
The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer  
The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".

## **Fresno cardiologist appointed to air board**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has appointed a Fresno cardiologist to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board.

Telles, 59, is a cardiologist and managing partner of Heart Group Cardiovascular Associates Inc. in Fresno. He is also a former president of the Fresno Madera Medical Society.

He fills the first of four new seats added to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Governing Board under a bill signed into law by the governor last year. The bill expanded the air board from 11 to 15 members, with the new positions to be filled by a doctor, a scientist and two representatives from valley cities with populations of more than 100,000.

Telles will also take the place of ousted Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case on the Air Resources Board.

Schwarzenegger appointed Case to the state board last year but a Senate committee rejected the appointment during confirmation hearings earlier this year.

The state Senate must confirm Telles' appointment to both boards.

## **Valley's greenery gives off pollutant**

### **Scientists looking at role of hydrocarbons in the ozone problem**

By MARK GROSSI - THE FRESNO BEE

in the Modesto Bee, Thursday, April 17, 2008

FRESNO -- An astonishing fact is buried in dirty-air data: Valley trees and plants produce far more hydrocarbons than vehicles do.

In the summer, crops, trees, lawns and the rest of nature release 360 tons daily of the key smog component. That's four times more hydrocarbons than from cars and trucks.

Hydrocarbons combine with other gases in vehicle exhaust to form the San Joaquin Valley's ozone, considered one of the nation's worst air problems.

Between the valley's millions of farmland acres and the Sierra Nevada's sprawling forests, this region has a lot of plants. How big a role does all this greenery play in the valley's bad air?

Scientists need the answer to help meet smog cleanup targets over the next 20 years. But it is difficult to know how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating ozone. Because plants play a role in cleaning the air, nobody has found a way to calculate the possible net benefits that trees and other plants provide for the valley.

Don't chop down those trees

For now, nobody is advising people to chop down trees to save the air. But scientists say people should plant trees such as Modesto ash, oleander and Bradford pear, which don't emit a lot of hydrocarbons, and avoid high-emitting trees such as sycamore, eucalyptus, weeping willow and cottonwood.

There is some truth to President Reagan's often-criticized statement that "trees pollute." But trees and plants remove ozone, trap carbon dioxide, filter microscopic debris and lower temperatures, which slows the creation of ozone.

City temperatures would climb if many valley trees were eliminated, said Greg McPherson, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Urban Forest Research at the University of California at Davis. And that would mean more ozone.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District continues to examine plant pollution contributions to the air, though officials say air agencies do not regulate such emissions.

The district needs to understand as much as possible about every source of pollution, officials said.

"Anything that does not help air quality needs to be investigated," said James Sweet, air quality analyst and project planner. "We need a clearer picture."

The district is pushing to meet the federal health standard for ozone by 2017, though the official cleanup target is 2024. The valley ranks alongside the Los Angeles area as having the nation's worst ozone problems.

The ozone fight is getting tougher. Federal officials have announced plans for a stricter ozone standard, and the valley may not achieve it until 2030.

Ozone forms as hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen cook in sunny weather. With hot, often stagnant summers and a bowl shape, the valley is an ideal place to form this corrosive gas.

The pollutant attacks skin, eyes and lungs. It can trigger asthma and other problems, especially in children and seniors.

Diesel trucks are the biggest source of oxides of nitrogen. Aside from nature, many tons of hydrocarbons come from dairies, gasoline, paint and other fumes.

An estimated 40 percent of the region's hydrocarbons come from nature. They also are known as volatile organic compounds such as isoprene, terpenes, alkanes, alkenes, alcohols, esters and carbonyls.

But state and federal air officials say they have trouble figuring out how much of nature's hydrocarbons are involved in creating smog.

For example, estimates show more than 30 tons of hydrocarbons are coming from farm fields. But are they the type of hydrocarbons that will remain in the air long enough to drift and form ozone in a city? Some will, others won't.

Valley farmers grow more than 200 crops and often change crops from season to season -- meaning different types and amounts of hydrocarbons are released. So, ozone levels could vary widely each season, depending on the crop.

Another complication: Hydrocarbons increase with plant damage, which happens during harvest. The same thing happens when you mow your lawn or trim your shrubbery.

Other factors include time of year, wind and rain, said John DaMassa, chief of modeling and meteorology at the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento.

Spread these issues over the 25,000-square-mile valley, scientists say, and any estimate is suspect.

But the regional air district needs to understand such a major hydrocarbon source to devise strategies for meeting the stringent ozone standard. The strategies wouldn't focus on plants and crops. They probably would continue to attack the other main ozone gas -- oxides of nitrogen.

DaMassa said science has known about nature's hydrocarbons for decades, and research has helped to describe the problem.

"We have better tools to do the research now," he said, "but we still need to do a lot more work."

Environmental scientist Ray Chavira of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco said, "There is no straight answer."

Scientists said hydrocarbons coming from the Sierra Nevada are not likely to harm air quality in the valley. But further research is needed, they said.

Air cleaning benefits well-known

The air-cleaning benefits of plants are known. Research shows an acre of a typical orchard or cotton field absorbs up to a half-pound of ozone in July.

But there is no valleywide figure for the amount of ozone being removed by millions of farmland acres. For years, scientists have focused on describing how ozone stunts plant growth and limits harvests, not defining the amount of ozone being removed.

In cities, research on the advantages of trees is well-developed and expanding. Forest Service researcher McPherson said that for every dollar a city invests in a properly maintained tree, the residents could get benefits equaling \$2 to \$5.

## **Police, fire unions oppose Rosedale refinery expansion**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

City police and firefighters unions announced Wednesday that they've joined the newly-formed community group Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid in opposing the use of a caustic chemical in a planned expansion at the Big West refinery.

Bill Ware, president of Bakersfield Police Officers Association, which represents 350 officers, said the union concluded the use of modified hydrofluoric acid would pose serious risks to the community surrounding the Rosedale Highway facility.

"It creates a major public safety issue not just because of all the dangers to responding officers but just the general public," Ware said.

Bakersfield Citizens Against Hydrofluoric Acid announced a campaign earlier this month to convince the refinery to abandon plans to use modified hydrofluoric acid in favor of sulfuric acid, an alternative the group believes is safer. The group's members include concerned residents and members of the Kern County Firefighters union. State Sen. Dean Florez has also opposed the chemical's use.

Modified hydrofluoric acid is an amended version of hydrofluoric acid, which gained a bad reputation as a dangerous chemical after several deadly releases at U.S. refineries in the 1980s and 1990s. HF, as it's known, can form a ground-hugging cloud when spilled that can travel for several miles, harming and possibly killing those in its path. Modified HF, however, contains an additive that releases the chemical's ability to vaporize by up to 80 percent.

The refinery would use modified HF in new alkylation units it wants to build as part of a \$700 million expansion to boost gasoline and diesel output.

Refinery officials maintain the chemical is safe and that its risks are no greater than sulfuric acid.

"I think there's a lot of misinformation getting around," said Bill Chadick, the refinery's health, safety and environmental director. "We are eager to sit down and talk to any group or agency that would like to hear the facts about our decision."

Chadick said refinery officials decided against sulfuric acid in part because of the large quantity of acid that would be transported to the facility by truck. Because less modified HF would be used, it would mean less truck trips and a decreased chance of a spill in transit.

Experts widely agree that modified HF and sulfuric acid are safer than pure HF. But there is no clear consensus on whether one of them is safer than the other.

"Needless Risk," a 2005 U.S. Public Interest Research Group study on the dangers of HF, stated that both sulfuric acid and modified HF significantly reduced community danger.

In a Californian interview last year, Cal Hodge, president of A 2nd Opinion, a fuels consulting firm in Texas, said modified HF and sulfuric acid are equally safe.

Modified HF was also seen as an acceptable alternative by Southern California air regulators who pushed in 2002 to ban pure HF at its refineries. Sam Atwood, a spokesman for the South Coast

Air Quality Management District, said the use of sulfuric acid was pushed by environmentalists at the time. But the district recognized the potential hazards associated with the amount of transport it required.

Atwood also said there have been no major incidents at either of the two Southland refineries now using modified HF.

### **Agency fines men for burning dozens of dead cows, sheep**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Two Kern County landowners have paid more than \$11,000 in fines for burning dead cattle and sheep on two occasions in 2006.

Jesus and Micaela Orozco owned land in Buttonwillow where firefighters and air inspectors found the smoldering remains of animals in April and June 2006.

The violation was recently settled following negotiations between the Orozcocos and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, according to Brenda Turner, an air district spokeswoman.

Between 50 and 100 carcasses were found in a 5 feet by 50 feet trench, according to the violation.

Burning animals is not allowed in the San Joaquin Valley because of the smell and the particulate matter it creates, which contributes to unhealthy air pollution.

It was unclear if the animals were from local farms or if they were brought to Kern County from elsewhere, Turner said.

Most dairies have an arrangement to send dead cattle to rendering plants because they can't be burned in the open, she said.

The Orozcocos could not be reached for comment.

### **I-5 reopened after fire, exploding ammo forced closure**

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, April 17, 2008

All lanes of I-5 have been re-opened following a closure earlier Wednesday caused by exploding ammunition during a controlled burn.

A Sheriff's Department bomb squad was investigating the incident, which closed I-5 from Highway 166 to Highway 223 and northbound I-5 at Highway 99, California Highway Patrol Officer Marc McWilliams said. Those roads had been closed since about 11 a.m.

Caltrans was burning some tumbleweeds in that area this morning when the fire hit several boxes of ammunition in the brush and the rounds started to explode, McWilliams said.

"We had to stop traffic so no one would get hit," McWilliams said.

## **2025 TARGET**

### **Bush Seeks Voluntary Curb On Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin

Washington Post, L.A. Daily News, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thurs., April 17, 2008

President Bush yesterday called for a national goal of halting the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, mostly by curbing power plant pollution. But his voluntary target fell well short of what most leading scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change and was widely criticized by Democratic lawmakers and environmentalists.

Bush's proposal -- which would rely on technological innovation for success -- was the administration's most definite public statement yet on global warming. Coming at a time when lawmakers and climate negotiators are focused on fashioning a binding climate accord under the next administration, however, it remained uncertain how much the president's initiative could influence the shape of legislation and impending treaty talks in the months to come.

Scientists of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded last year that global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to drop by 2015 in order to avert drastic climate change, a timetable that would compel developed nations to turn that corner even earlier, given the rapidly rising emission rates of developing nations such as China and India. Some experts, moreover, now say recent research indicates the IPCC timeline is inadequate.

Speaking one day before the administration's climate negotiators meet in Paris with representatives of other major carbon-emitting nations, Bush said in a Rose Garden speech that "there is a wrong way and a right way to approach reducing greenhouse gas emissions" and that he remains opposed to any mandatory emissions caps.

"The wrong way is to raise taxes, duplicate mandates or demand sudden and drastic emissions cuts that have no chance of being realized and every chance of hurting our economy," he said. "The right way is to set realistic goals for reducing emissions consistent with advances in technology, while increasing our energy security and ensuring our economy can continue to prosper and grow."

Several Democratic lawmakers mocked Bush's announcement, saying they expect the next president to sign a climate bill into law. The Senate is planning to vote on legislation in June that seeks to halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012, 13 years before Bush's deadline, and all three presidential candidates are expected to back that timetable.

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing -- it is the height of irresponsibility."

Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs the House select panel on global warming, said the speech "further complicates the ability for Congress to produce legislation" because "the real headline for today's announcement should be, 'Bush pledges to do nothing before January 20, 2009, the day he leaves office.' "

Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, said in an interview that he hoped Bush's speech would send "a strong signal" to House Republicans that they should forge a bipartisan deal on capping carbon emissions. "Candidly, it is not as strong a signal as I would have preferred, though it is a signal nonetheless," Boucher said.

However, senior GOP lawmakers, including Sen. James M. Inhofe (Okla.) and Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (Wis.), the ranking members on Boxer's and Markey's committees, both continue to reject mandatory curbs on emissions.

A few industry and environmental representatives welcomed Bush's announcement. Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp said, "The positive is the president recognizes the need for federal action," even if his prescription was not bold enough. R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it showed that the president was working to stave off more draconian climate regulations that could be forced on the government by court decisions. " 'No' is not a sustainable answer," Josten said.

International climate negotiators, for their part, are increasingly focused on reaching out to the three presidential candidates -- Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Barack Obama (D-Ill.) -- in order to move toward a global climate pact by the end of 2009, when U.N. negotiators are due to meet in Copenhagen.

In an interview last week, Yvo de Boer, the lead U.N. climate negotiator, said he had queried Senate aides about the candidates' positions this month during recent U.N. climate talks in Bangkok.

"They're all committed to action on climate change," de Boer said of the candidates, adding that reaching agreement with the next president is urgent. "You can't do that early enough, because these are the people who are crucial to doing a deal in Copenhagen," de Boer said.

David B. Sandalow, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said events have overtaken Bush even as he seeks to make his mark on climate policy.

"Most of the world -- including Senator John McCain -- has moved beyond him on this issue," Sandalow said. "The most important decisions in the international global warming negotiations will be made once President Bush leaves office. President Bush's climate change policies will have little or no influence on his successor, whose leadership will shape the world's response to global warming for years to come."

## **Bush calls for halt in growth of emissions**

Zachary Coile, Chronicle Washington bureau  
S.F. Chronicle, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Washington -- President Bush, in a Rose Garden speech that served to inflame his critics, called Wednesday for a halt in the growth of U.S. greenhouse gases by 2025 and said emissions from power plants should peak in the next 10 to 15 years - the first time he has set specific targets for limiting emissions that contribute to global warming.

But the president proposed no new regulations or legislation to ensure that his new targets are met, and his proposal falls far short of the cuts in greenhouse gases that scientists say are needed to avoid the worst effects of rising temperatures and sea levels.

Democrats said Bush's real goal is to undermine a new Senate bill opposed by the White House, which would reduce emissions by 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 66 percent by 2050. The Senate plans to debate the bill in June.

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked," said Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Bush's speech was an effort to reinsert himself in the national and international debate over climate change. But his clout is limited: He has just nine months left in office, and already many foreign leaders and U.S. lawmakers are looking ahead to the next president. All three major contenders - Sens. Barack Obama, Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain - support stringent limits on emissions.

Bush also appeared to be trying to burnish his reputation on an issue on which, his critics believe, he will be judged harshly by history. Bush said Wednesday his administration should be credited for a "rational, balanced approach" that protects the environment and economic growth.

He said his new goals for halting the growth in emissions could be reached through existing policies: new fuel economy standards passed by Congress last year; a mandate to increase the use of ethanol and other biofuels; and new efficiency standards for lighting and appliances.

"Taken together, these landmark actions will prevent billions of metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere," he said.

## **Democrats blast plan**

Democrats on Capitol Hill said Bush was misleading the public by suggesting that global warming could be solved without requiring power plants and other major industrial sources to slash their emissions.

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility," said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

But Bush, in his speech, seemed to recognize the political reality that Congress is almost certain to pass some climate change legislation over the next few years.

Without endorsing any bill, he discussed the principles that should guide the legislation. He said the measure should not raise energy costs for consumers or disadvantage U.S. businesses. He added that any new policy should increase the use of nuclear power and speed the development of new cleaner technologies.

"If we fully implement our new strong laws, adhere to the principles I've outlined and adopt appropriate incentives, we will put America on an ambitious new track for greenhouse gas reductions," he said.

### **Incentive from courts**

White House aides said Bush also jumped into the debate Wednesday because he feared that federal courts have already begun to write the nation's first climate policies.

The Supreme Court, in a rebuke to the White House, ruled last year that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act and that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate them.

The ruling required EPA to make a finding on whether those gases endanger human health and welfare, which could require the agency to regulate greenhouse gases from vehicles, power plants and other sources.

Bush's Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, is under pressure to list the polar bear as an endangered species because of disappearing Arctic sea ice. Industry leaders warn that such a listing would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to weigh in on new projects - from coal-fired power plants to new highways - if they add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Bush echoed those concerns Wednesday. He said he agreed with Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., who warned last week that forcing the EPA to start regulating carbon emissions, because of the high court's ruling, could create a "glorious mess." Bush said the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act were not meant to deal with a global problem like climate change.

"Decisions with such far-reaching impact should not be left to unelected regulators and judges," he said. "Such decisions should be debated openly. Such decisions should be made by the elected representatives of the people they affect."

### **Bush reversal?**

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, said he was stunned to hear Bush criticizing the high court's ruling in the Massachusetts vs. EPA case.

"Last May the president went to the Rose Garden, the same place, and he said he accepted the Supreme Court's decision as the law of the land and he told his EPA to implement it," Doniger said. "Now he's calling the court a bunch of activist judges and thumbing his nose at existing law?"

Bush's speech came a day before French President Nicolas Sarkozy leads a two-day meeting in Paris of the world's 17 largest emitters. Bush said he'll push for the Group of Eight major industrialized countries, at a summit in July, to announce an agreement on long-term goals for emissions reductions.

Critics believe the White House is using the international meetings to stall any action at home to start reducing emissions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, noted that Pope Benedict XVI, who met with Bush at the White House Wednesday, has urged all nations to address global warming.

"The president should heed (the pope's) warnings about our moral responsibility to act, calling for a 'strong commitment to reverse those trends that risk making the situation of decay irreversible,' " Pelosi said.

### **WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CUTTING EMISSIONS**

"We've shown that we can slow emissions growth, but today I'm announcing a new national goal: to stop the growth of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
President Bush

"The president is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming."  
Carl Pope, *Sierra Club executive director*

"By the time President Bush's plan finally starts to cut global warming emissions, the planet will already be cooked."  
Rep. Ed Markey, *D-Mass., chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming*

"The president should encourage the efforts of governors and mayors across the country who stepped into the void of leadership when the Bush administration failed to act."  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, *D-San Francisco*

"The president's plan to have America stand by while greenhouse gases reach dangerous levels and threaten America and the world is worse than doing nothing - it is the height of irresponsibility."  
Sen. Barbara Boxer, *D-Calif., chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee*

"President Bush has laid out a constructive and balanced set of principles to curb greenhouse gas emissions by 2025."  
John Engler, *president of the National Association of Manufacturers*

### **Celebrate Earth Day all year-long**

By Megan Lavalley Around Brentwood  
Tri-Valley Herald, Thursday, April 17, 2008

Yes, Earth Day does fall on a Tuesday this year, but that does not mean that you cannot get a head start this weekend.

Be inspired by the students of Liberty's Interact Club! Beginning Sunday, at 7:30 a.m., they are building four houses in four days. With 20 students participating, and utilizing the money they earned from a benefit dinner, the students of Liberty's Interact Club, with the aid of Brentwood's Rotary Club, will be working with Habitat for Humanity, to donate their time and efforts toward making this Earth a more hospitable one for four families.

On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the globe. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has evolved into a world-wide campaign to protect our global environment.

Make your plot of Earth beautiful and head out to the Brentwood Iris Garden on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the 2008 Iris Festival. Located at 195 Payne Avenue off of Walnut Boulevard, the garden has hundreds of varieties of irises on display. If you find something that you take a fancy to, purchase it to take home and plant, to enjoy year-round. There will be free hot dogs and drinks, and iris-themed high school art will be on display. Visitors to the Iris Festival will vote on the winner of the art contest, until its closing at 2 p.m., and will help in determining the winner of the \$1,000 grand prize. The winner will be revealed at 3 p.m. at the close of the festival.

Items you can keep in mind year-round to make every day an Earth Day.

- ? Outsmart and prevent pests by removing sources of food, water and shelter before deciding to use a pesticide.
- ? Crowd out weeds the natural way — keep your grass long. Over-seed your lawn each fall for a thicker lawn in the spring. Slightly longer grass, around 2½ to 3½ inches, is healthier and drought-resistant with fewer pests and weeds, which have a hard time taking root.
- ? Many plants and insects can serve as nontoxic, natural deterrents to weeds and garden pests. Introduce ladybugs to eat aphids, plant marigolds to ward off beetles, and look for quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
- ? Eat a locally produced diet. Grow your own food or support local farmers, natural food stores and food co-ops. You'll save money, eat quality foods, create jobs, increase farmlands, and strengthen your community. You also reduce pollution generated by transportation and energy costs from shipping food.
- ? Get a programmable thermostat and set the temperature up in the summer and down in the winter while you are at work.
- ? Buy food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those in non-recyclable packaging. It can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas that is potentially harmful to the environment.
- ? Buy in bulk when you can and avoid excess packaging. Even recyclable packaging requires energy and resources to create. Also look for refillable containers. Seek out concentrated products, which use far less packaging.
- ? In a lifetime, the average American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. This means that each adult will leave a legacy of 90,000 pounds of trash for his or her children.
- ? Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions, a green house gas, by 850 pounds a year.
- ? Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV set for three hours or to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.

Keep in mind that we live on Earth 365 days a year, 366 on Leap Year, like this year. If we all take care of Earth every single day, and do what is needed, then special days like Earth Day will not be only celebrated once a year, but become ingrained in the fabric of our culture.

## **Olympic stadium, known as Bird's Nest, gets modest opening**

By STEPHEN WADE, AP Sports Writer

In the Merced Sun-Star, Contra Costa Times and other papers, Thursday, April 17, 2008

BEIJING-The centerpiece of the Beijing Olympics rises 230 feet tall, its lattice of steel beams sometimes vanishing in a thick blanket of smog.

Quietly and without fanfare, officials have opened the National Stadium - nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" - and it's ready to hatch its first sports event.

The final touches on the \$450 million, 91,000-seat stadium won't be completed until next month, but organizers let journalists in Wednesday to look around.

Inside, Franco Destefanis of Italy knelt as he installed the last few slabs of the rubberized running surface for track events.

"The design, the new-style architecture and the size is impressive," said Destefanis, who has worked on 150 stadiums around the world and is doing his fifth straight Olympic track and field venue. "The outside catches your eye, particularly with the lights at night."

Its unusual design was created by twisted steel beams that wrap around the exterior to resemble silver twigs binding a nest together. The icon of the Beijing Games, it's been called the best work produced by Switzerland-based architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron.

However, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who was a consultant on the project, has since criticized it. He has likened the stadium to a "fake smile," designed to hide social and political problems in China, which hopes to use the Olympics to show off its new political and economic power.

Of China's 37 Olympic venues, the stadium is the last to be completed. There have been minor delays, although organizers have denied construction problems. They have said that preparing for the Aug. 8 opening ceremony has required adjustments to building schedules, pushing back the stadium's completion by a few months.

Officials confirmed three months ago that two workers died during construction on the stadium, but denied media reports that at least 10 had died.

In addition to the opening ceremony, the stadium hosts track and field events and the closing ceremony.

The first event at the stadium will be on Friday and Saturday - a low-key race-walking meet. No glitzy ceremonies, political speeches or fireworks are scheduled.

On the inside, the fancy exterior lattice work is hidden from view. The roof that partially extends over many of the seats is covered with a canvas-like material that will keep rain off most fans. It also blocks strong sunlight from casting shadows on the field that could ruin TV pictures.

The stadium's indoor color scheme is red, gray and black. There was no sign of where the Olympic cauldron will be located.

From the outside, the size of the stadium overwhelms everything else, even the neighboring swimming venue, known as the "Water Cube."

Police have cracked down on cars stopping on the shoulder of a nearby highway to snap photos of the stadium. Curious pedestrians still line a 12-foot-high wire fence to have a look.

"When I first saw the stadium, I didn't know what it was," said Duan Jingxuan, leaning a shoulder on the handle of his shovel as he landscaped a small pine grove bordering a pond just east of the site.

Like thousands of migrant workers who have come to Beijing to build Olympic venues, Duan earns about \$150 monthly and sends most of it home to his family in central China.

"As soon as I found out what it was, I wanted to know what it cost," Duan added. "I called my son right away - he's working at an oil field - and told him I was doing work for the Olympics. I'm proud to work here and it shows China is getting richer."

As organizers opened the stadium to journalists on Wednesday, a thick haze of pollution made it nearly invisible from a half-mile away.

Officials say strict pollution controls will begin no later than July 20. This means closing cement factories and foundries, and halting work at hundreds of building projects. Plans are also afoot to ban about half of Beijing's 3.3 million vehicles.

The International Olympic Committee has said it will postpone outdoor endurance events if air quality is poor, and IOC President Jacques Rogge has acknowledged that athletes' performances might be "slightly reduced" because of the pollution.

In the last month, the image of the Beijing Olympics have been sullied by protests along the torch relay route as pro-Tibet and human-rights demonstrators have focused world attention on China's policies.

Protesters are also expected to stage demonstrations during the games, testing China's ability to portray itself as a modern, sophisticated nation, despite spending an estimated \$40 billion to remake the capital.

But organizers such as Liang Gang, the deputy press manager for the venue, are confident everything will fall into place once the games begin.

"Here in the stadium, they (the athletes) will concentrate on the competition, on the basic things of sports, and not the other things," he said.

[Turlock Journal Editorial, Wednesday, April 16, 2008](#)

### **Green opposition**

As Earth Day approaches once again, I have been inundated with e-mails and press releases for and (believe it or not) against this environmental awareness holiday.

One such letter of Earth Day opposition from Sally C. Pipes, president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute, which you can read under the "Your Views" section of the Opinion page, states that because America has made strides in protecting the environment, we shouldn't worry anymore about it and basically Earth Day is a waste of time.

This anti-Earth Day rhetoric surprised me and I have to disagree. I have always had positive experiences with Earth Day. In elementary school, Earth Day meant getting to spend the entire day in the Outdoor Education Center which was located in an area of woods behind the school building. When my daughter was younger, I took her to many Earth Day celebrations at local parks where we both learned more about the environment we live in and how to be better stewards of the Earth.

Earth Day revelry is alive and well in Turlock. The City of Turlock Municipal Services will be hosting their annual Healthy Family-Healthy Earth festival at the Turlock Regional Sports Complex on April 26. This event highlights how to take care of your body and the Earth. For 2008, Municipal Services has also initiated their "100 Things to Go Green" campaign which includes weekly tips on how to conserve energy and water, articles on environmental preservation and the recognition of local youth that are giving back to the environment through the "Green Teen of the

Month" program.

Americans decided many years ago that what happens to the Earth is their business and does matter. The very first Earth Day celebration was on April 22, 1970. I'm sure with everything that was going on in the world, Vietnam, rising crime rates and inflation, President Richard Nixon was surprised by how many Americans felt passionately enough about the environment to take a day off from work and recreation to observe this fledgling holiday.

Of course, in 1970 pollution was obvious. People could see and smell the smog filling the skies and the toxins filling America's waterways. And so the environmental movement was born, with Earth Day as its sounding call.

The following is a short time-line of major environmental events that started with the first Earth Day:

- 1970

- Twenty million people celebrate the first Earth Day.
- President Richard Nixon creates the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Congress amends the Clean Air Act to set national air quality, auto emission and anti-pollution standards.

- 1971

- Congress restricts use of lead-based paint in residences and on cribs and toys.

- 1972

- EPA bans DDT, a cancer-causing pesticide and requires extensive review of all pesticides.
- Congress passes the Clean Water Act, limiting raw sewage and other pollutants flowing into rivers, lakes and streams.

- 1973

- EPA begins phasing out leaded gasoline.
- OPEC oil embargo triggers energy crisis, stimulating conservation and research on alternative energy sources.
- Congress passes Safe Drinking Water Act, allowing EPA to regulate the quality of public drinking water.

- 1976

- Congress passes the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulating hazardous waste from its production to its disposal.
- President Gerald Ford signs the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce environmental and human health risks.

- 1978

- The federal government bans chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as propellants in aerosol cans

because CFCs destroy the ozone layer which protects the Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

- 1979

- Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident near Harrisburg, Penn. increases awareness and discussion about nuclear power safety. EPA and other agencies monitor radioactive fallout.

These events and legislation to clean up our environment and protect our health came about in just the first 10 years after the inaugural Earth Day celebration. Over the past 38 years, there have been many advances made in conservation and cleaning up what we have spoiled, but we can't forget that there is only one Earth and if we make it too toxic to live on we'll be up that proverbial creek without a paddle.

So I will be celebrating Earth Day this year, despite what Sally C. Pipes says, because I believe that environmental vigilance is what we need, not apathy.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger appoints Dr. John Telles to ARB. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

### **Schwarzenegger integra a médico a la Oficina de Recursos del Aire**

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Thursday, April 17, 2008

El gobernador, Arnold Schwarzenegger nombró a un médico de una de las regiones más contaminadas en el país para formar parte de la oficina de Recursos del Aire de California, la institución que decide políticas contra la contaminación.

El gobernador nombró a John Telles, médico de Fresno, California, como nuevo miembro de la oficina. El nombramiento queda sujeto todavía a ratificación del Senado estatal.

Por su profesión el médico y demócrata conoce de primera mano las condiciones que ocasionan miles de casos de asma infantil y otros daños a la comunidad del Valle de San Joaquín en California.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Bush's proposal to reduce pollution from industries by 2025.](#)

### **Bush propone reducir gases contaminantes de industria y frenarlos en 2025**

Hoy Internet, Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Washington, 16 abr (EFE).- El presidente de Estados Unidos, George W. Bush, propuso hoy que la industria energética del país disminuya las emisiones de gases contaminantes en los próximos diez o quince años, con el fin de frenar los causantes del efecto invernadero para 2025.

En un discurso pronunciado hoy en la Rosaleda de la Casa Blanca, Bush, que al principio de su mandato se mostró como un gran escéptico sobre el calentamiento global, presentó una estrategia para hacer frente a ese problema.

"Creemos que necesitamos proteger nuestro medioambiente, creemos que necesitamos fortalecer nuestra seguridad energética y necesitamos que crezca nuestra economía. La única manera de lograrlo es a través de continuos avances en la tecnología", afirmó el presidente.

En este sentido, avanzó el objetivo de detener el crecimiento de las emisiones de gases en Estados Unidos para 2025.

Para alcanzar esa meta, "tenemos que disminuir más rápidamente el crecimiento de las emisiones en el sector de la energía, de modo que alcancen su techo en diez o quince años y empiecen a disminuir a partir de entonces".

Bush también se mostró en contra de "exigir recortes de emisiones drásticos y repentinos" que, según él, "no tienen posibilidad de lograrse" y en cambio sí pueden perjudicar la economía.

"El mejor camino es fijar metas realistas para reducir las emisiones de manera consistente con los avances en la tecnología, al tiempo que aumentamos nuestra seguridad energética y nos aseguramos de que nuestra economía siga prosperando y creciendo", declaró.

El mandatario aludió a los planes del Congreso, que tiene previsto debatir en junio una serie de propuestas legislativas sobre medioambiente y que prevén la imposición de recortes de emisiones obligatorios.

"Una mala legislación impondría tremendos costes en nuestra economía y las familias estadounidenses sin cumplir las importantes metas medioambientales que compartimos", advirtió el presidente.

Bush, una de cuyas primeras medidas como presidente fue repudiar el Protocolo de Kioto sobre medioambiente, cree que las principales economías mundiales, incluidas emergentes como India o China, deben fijarse una meta para recortar sus propias emisiones de gases causantes del efecto invernadero.

El pasado diciembre, EE.UU. acordó junto a otros casi 200 países en una reunión en Bali (Indonesia) negociar un nuevo acuerdo que sustituya al Protocolo Kioto para finales del año próximo.

En su discurso de hoy, Bush afirmó que la mejor manera de hacer frente al cambio climático es "garantizar que las principales economías están comprometidas a tomar medidas y cooperar con nuestros socios a favor de un acuerdo internacional sobre el clima justo y efectivo".

El presidente también se declaró en contra de abandonar la energía nuclear y en cambio propuso "más energía nuclear libre de emisiones".