

Blowing dust warning issued

Bakersfield Californian, Tuesday, April 14, 2009

Air pollution officials warned that high winds expected Tuesday morning through Wednesday could create unhealthy air quality.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District has advised people who are sensitive to poor air quality to use caution.

Particulate pollution can aggravate lung disease, cause asthma attacks and contribute to acute bronchitis and other respiratory illness. Research has shown that short-term exposure to particle pollution has been linked to heart attacks in people with heart disease.

Valley winds may kick up dust storms, threaten health

By Jim Guy

The Fresno Bee, Tuesday, April 14, 2009

Wind gusts as high as 34 mph are expected in the Valley today, prompting the National Weather Service to warn against dust storms after 11 a.m.

Motorists on the Valley's west side are advised to drive with caution. Blowing dust is expected into the evening (get the current forecast).

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District issued a health warning in response to the wind forecast. Exposure to particulate pollution can cause serious health problems, aggravate lung disease, cause asthma attacks and acute bronchitis, and increase the risk of respiratory infections, district officials said.

Bay Area News Roundup

S.F. Chronicle, Tuesday, April 14, 2009

Owners of heavy duty vehicles and equipment in the Bay Area can apply this week for grant money to replace or upgrade older, polluting diesel engines, according to regional air quality regulators.

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District has up to \$20 million in grant money for eligible projects, provided by the Carl Moyer Program, a state-funded program to reduce ozone-forming and toxic emissions from aging diesel equipment.

The program is designed to address diesel trucks and buses, marine vessels, construction equipment, locomotives and agricultural irrigation pumps.

Jack Broadbent, executive officer of the air district, said such vehicles and equipment are "a major source of toxic emissions in the Bay Area."

Particular areas of concern in the Bay Area are eastern San Francisco, West Oakland, East Oakland and San Leandro, San Jose, Richmond and Concord, and the air district will give preference to programs in those communities.

Grants will be available for projects including the installation of particle traps, the replacement of older diesel engines with newer and cleaner engines, and the purchase of new, cleaner vehicles and equipment.

The air district is accepting proposals beginning Wednesday. A workshop in San Francisco on Friday will explain program guidelines. For more information, visit www.baaqmd.gov/moyer.

CECO Environmental Receives New Orders Totaling Approximately \$3.7 Million

Fresno Bee, Tuesday, April 14, 2009

CINCINNATI, April 14 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ CECO Environmental Corp. (Nasdaq: CECE), a leading provider of air pollution control and industrial ventilation systems, announced today that it has received orders from three separate customers totaling approximately \$3.7 million.

Rick Blum, President and Chief Operating Officer, stated, "These orders came from the power, chemical, and automotive industries. They were secured by companies in our equipment and contracting groups."

Phillip DeZwirek, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, stated, "The power industry continues to be very active. Contracts in that industry are the largest segment of our backlog. The new automotive order was secured from a foreign automotive manufacturer located in the southeastern United States."

ABOUT CECO ENVIRONMENTAL

CECO Environmental Corp. is North America's largest independent air pollution control company. Through its subsidiaries -- Busch, CECOaire, CECO Filters, CECO Abatement Systems, kbd/Technic, Kirk & Blum, H. M. White, Inc., Effox, GMD, Fisher-Klosterman, Flextor and AVC Specialists -- CECO provides a wide spectrum of air quality services and products including: industrial air filters, environmental maintenance, monitoring and management services, and air quality improvements systems. CECO is a full-service provider to the steel, military, aluminum, automotive, ethanol, aerospace, electric power, semiconductor, chemical, cement, metalworking, glass, foundry and virtually all industrial process industries.

For more information on CECO Environmental, please visit the company's website at www.cecoenviro.com.

Long Beach Board of Harbor Commissioners approves port expansion The \$750-million project will merge two aging terminals and create an estimated 14,000 jobs.

By Louis Sahagun
LA Times, Tuesday, April 14, 2009

The Long Beach Board of Harbor Commissioners on Monday unanimously approved a 10-year, \$750-million expansion project that will merge two aging terminals and create an estimated 14,000 jobs.

Work on the Middle Harbor Redevelopment Project will be done in phases, according to James C. Hankla, president of the board of commissioners. Construction could begin as early as December.

"This is a chance to move these two terminals into the modern era, into the container shipping industry's greener and more business-friendly future," Hankla said in a statement.

The project aims to improve the port's competitive position and implement measures to head off threatened lawsuits to force reductions in port-related pollution. About 65,000 feet of railroad track will be added so that nearly one-third of Middle Harbor's cargo will be moved by train and, with dockside electrical power to become available, vessels will be able to turn off their auxiliary diesel engines.

\$150M sought to buy ACE track corridor

By Dennis Wyatt, Managing Editor
Manteca Bulletin Tues., April 14, 2009

It's a \$150 million investment backers say will relieve traffic congestion, take trucks off the crowded Altamont Pass corridor, reduce air pollution, strengthen the San Joaquin County economy, and ease the need for more freeway construction.

That is the price tag to acquire the Union Pacific right-of-way and tracks crossing the Altamont Pass that four ACE trains in each direction take each working day. The San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission is making a pitch to secure \$20.5 million from the federal government to jump start the effort to raise \$150 million to buy the property. It will be part of the One Voice consortium of private and public sector leaders trekking to Washington, D.C., later this month to do face-to-face presentations with key bureaucrats and congressional leaders on a wide variety of projects that focus primarily around transportation.

Manteca is seeking \$2.5 million for preliminary design work on the proposed \$140 million Austin Road interchange replacement on Highway 99 plus \$5 million for the Manteca central sewer trunk replacement project expected to cost \$10 million during the One Voice trip.

The rail commission is also seeking \$240,000 in federal money toward a \$330,000 study on the feasibility of alternative to power locomotives.

Rail commission ownership of the corridor is vital for future efforts to add more Altamont Commute Express passenger trains, retain and improve on-time efforts, as well as make sure there is a secure corridor for possible future expansion of high speed rail as well as expanded freight service considered critical to developing jobs in San Joaquin County.

On-time performance at one point dropped into the 70 percent range before Union Pacific agreed to build a stronger working relationship with ACE. That was also before the economic slowdown reduced UP freight movements.

On-time percentages are now in the mid-90 percent range. In order to maintain that in the future as well as to have the ability to add additional trains, ACE needs ownership of the tracks. ACE spokesman Thomas Reeves noted that with Union Pacific in control the three morning commute and the mid-day trains that are running have maxed out the passenger train potential. The only way for it to change would be for passenger service to get a higher priority which is through public ownership.

The \$150 million may sound like a lot but it isn't compared to adding freeway lanes the same distance. It is taking \$92 million just to add one free lane in each direction just between Tracy and Interstate 5.

ACE control of the tracks would also allow the rail commission to provide better freight movement service for firms doing business based in San Joaquin County which would be a further enticement for job creation. It also would take more trucks off the Altamont corridor in addition to passenger cars.

Average weekly ridership during the morning commute is up 17.4 percent in February to 14,500. The Tracy station is the heaviest used in the morning with 35.2 percent of the passengers boarding there. Lathrop-Manteca is next at 21 percent followed by Pleasanton at 19.4 percent.

Feds oppose gas terminal in Long Island Sound

By Frank Eltman, Associated Press Writer

In the Contra Costa Times, Tri-Valley Herald, Washington Post & other papers, Tuesday, April 14, 2009

GARDEN CITY, N.Y.—The U.S. Commerce Department on Monday announced its opposition to a proposed massive floating liquefied natural gas terminal in Long Island Sound.

Environmentalists hailed the decision as a victory over "the corporate Goliaths of our time." Politicians in New York and Connecticut have campaigned for several years to stop what would have been the world's first floating liquefied natural gas terminal.

About the size of the Queen Mary 2, the terminal would be the length of four football fields, about eight stories high and located nine miles off Long Island and 11 miles from the Connecticut coast. After New York Gov. David Paterson ruled against the project last year, Broadwater—a consortium of Shell Oil and TransCanada Pipelines Ltd.—appealed to the Commerce Department.

The department said Monday the project's "adverse coastal impacts outweighed its national interest" and noted its location in an undeveloped area 70 miles east of Manhattan would undermine decades of federal, state, and local efforts to protect the region.

"Today's decision is the final nail in Broadwater's coffin," said U.S. Rep. Timothy Bishop, D-N.Y. "The Department of Commerce has affirmed once and for all that Broadwater is not a cost effective energy solution ... and fails basic safety and environmental tests" Connecticut Gov. Jodi Rell said, "This misguided project is now down for the count." Paterson said the decision helps protect "one of our greatest natural and economic resources."

Broadwater, which noted it had previously received approval from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, said it was disappointed by the ruling. Any additional challenges would likely come in the courts, but a Broadwater executive said no decision has been made on how to proceed.

"We believe the region will need additional natural gas to ensure a reliable supply of energy, help reduce price spikes and meet air quality and climate change goals," said John Hritcko, Broadwater's senior vice president.

Adrienne Esposito, executive director of the Long Island-based Citizens Campaign for the Environment, called the Commerce Department's decision "an exhilarating public victory."

"This was a modern day David and Goliath battle. The public won over the corporate Goliaths of our time," Esposito said.

Save the Sound, a program of the Connecticut Fund for the Environment, echoed those sentiments. "Shell didn't listen to us, but now they are hearing the same message from state and federal leaders," said Leah Schmalz, director of legislative and legal affairs.

Proposals for LNG terminals around the country have prompted environmental and safety concerns, but LNG advocates say they have an excellent safety record.

Former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani's consulting company, Giuliani Partners, concluded in a 2006 safety and security assessment that the proposed terminal would be "as safe a facility in design as you could possibly have."

Unemployed seek training for 'green collar' jobs

By Terence Chea - Associated Press Writer

In the Modesto Bee and Merced Sun-Star, Monday, April 13, 2009

SAN JOSE, Calif. -- As the economy sheds jobs, community colleges across the country are reporting a surge of unemployed workers enrolling in courses that offer training for "green-collar" jobs.

Students are learning how to install solar panels, repair wind turbines, produce biofuels and do other work related to renewable energy.

"I think the opportunities in this field are going to be huge," said Rudy Gastelo, a part-time handyman who left the construction industry two years ago. "I'm not getting that 9-to-5 paycheck, so I'm looking forward to maybe getting a job within a solar company."

To meet growing demand, two-year colleges are launching or expanding green job training with money from the federal stimulus package.

Students and schools are betting that President Barack Obama's campaign to promote alternative energy and curb global warming will create millions of well-paying green jobs that do not require a four-year degree.

Gastelo, 32, is learning how to install solar power systems at San Jose City College, which has long waiting lists for such classes.

But the steep economic downturn has not spared the green energy industry, which had been expanding rapidly before the financial crisis. Many renewable-power firms are now canceling projects, laying off workers or selling themselves to competitors because business has dried up.

"It's going to be a very tough year. A lot of companies are not going to make it," said Ron Pernick, co-founder of the market research firm Clean Edge Inc.

Many newly trained workers are having trouble finding jobs, and some people worry that schools could end up producing too many workers for too few jobs.

"Even in these areas with great potential, the number of actual positions is way down from where they could be," said Barry Sedlick, who chairs the California Green Collar Jobs Council.

But many college officials believe there will be strong demand for green-collar workers once the economy rebounds and governments move to limit greenhouse gas emissions and require more alternative energy.

The federal stimulus package sets aside tens of billions of dollars to promote renewable energy and energy efficiency. It will also create thousands of jobs retrofitting government buildings and public housing to make them more energy-efficient.

"The recovery package will help move industry forward and offer a lot of opportunities for workers at all levels," said Mindy Feldbaum, director of workforce development programs at the National Institute for Work and Learning.

The renewable energy industry generated about 500,000 jobs and \$43 billion revenue in the U.S. in 2007. The much broader energy-efficiency industry generated 8.6 million jobs and \$1 trillion in revenue, according to a report issued in January by the American Solar Energy Society.

The study projected that the two sectors could employ 16 million to 37 million people by 2030, depending on government policy.

In Florida, Palm Beach Community College expects to enroll 200 students this fall - up from 20 students last fall and 150 students this spring - in a new associate degree program that focuses on alternative energy sources such as wind, solar or hydroelectric power.

Associate Dean Sam Freas is optimistic about green energy's long-term prospects, but he is careful to set realistic expectations among students.

"They look at me and say, 'Can you guarantee me a job?'" he said. "And the answer is, 'Absolutely not.'"

In North Carolina, Central Carolina Community College has long waiting lists for green building and renewable energy classes. The school recently created an associate degree for sustainable fuel production.

"The perception is that there is just a ton of these green jobs already out there," said Andrew McMahan, who coordinates the biofuels program. "The reality is that they are coming, but like any other industry it needs time to mature."

In Michigan, which has the nation's highest unemployment rate at 12 percent, Lansing Community College has seen enrollment in its alternative energy degree program grow from 42 students in 2005 to 252 students in 2008. This fall, the college will begin offering certificates for solar, geothermal, wind turbine and energy efficiency technicians.

Most new students are middle-aged men who recently lost jobs in the auto industry, which makes them eligible for a state program that provides \$10,000 to unemployed workers for training.

"They see the field of alternative energy as the industry that's going to pick up where the automotive industry left off," said David Wilson, who coordinates the alternative energy program.

In Silicon Valley, community colleges have teamed up with the solar energy industry to train workers how to install rooftop systems. When the program was launched in 2007, solar power was growing rapidly in California, thanks in part to a \$3 billion state rebate program.

But the financial crisis has frozen the market for new systems. Many solar-installation firms are laying off workers, not hiring them.

Matthew Welch, who teaches the Solar 102 class at San Jose City College, recently lost his job as a solar installer. Now he is starting his own solar company and may try to hire some of his students.

"The cost is going to be coming down," Welch said. "You're going to be seeing solar everywhere in the future."

Dairy industry sees less-gassy future for cows

By Robert Imrie, Associated Press Writer

In the Modesto Bee and Merced Sun-Star, Tuesday, April 14, 2009

WAUSAU, Wis. -- The U.S. dairy industry wants to engineer the "cow of the future" to pass less gas, a project aimed at cutting the industry's greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent by 2020. The cow project aims to reduce intestinal methane, the single largest component of the dairy industry's carbon footprint, said Thomas P. Gallagher, chief executive officer of the U.S. Dairy and Dairy Management Inc.'s Innovation Center in Rosemont, Ill.

One area to be explored is modifying the dairy cows' feed so they produce less methane, said Rick Naczi, the leader of the initiative.

"Right now there is some work being done on fish-oil additives and some other things," he said. "The cow is responsible for the majority of the greenhouse gas on the farm itself. We know there are ways that we can find to cut or reduce that production."

Another possible solution is targeting the microbes in the cow's gut, Naczi said. "You can change the mix of the bacteria in the cow's rumen and change the methane production that way." He expects the research to develop some solutions within a year.

The initiative could have a huge effect in Wisconsin. The state has about 1.25 million dairy cows, or about 14 percent of the national total.

Dairy Management Inc. manages the national dairy checkoff program, which collects 15 cents per hundredweight of raw milk produced by farmers to fund research and promotion of dairy products. Greenhouse gas emissions are blamed for global warming. Cutting the dairy industry's emissions by 25 percent would be equivalent to removing about 1.25 million passenger cars from the nation's roads every year, Gallagher said.

The University of Arkansas' Applied Sustainability Center estimates the dairy industry contributes less than 2 percent of total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions. But consumers increasingly demand products that are produced, packaged and distributed in a sustainable way, Gallagher said.

The industry said it has dramatically reduced the carbon footprint of its products by 63 percent over the past 60 years through production efficiencies, nutrition management and technological improvements.

Other greenhouse gas emission projects to be explored include turning digester-generated methane into energy that can be sold. A pilot program in California identifies the best energy-efficiency practices in milk processing plants and assesses current and new packaging formats.

Managing agricultural operations in a sustainable way can improve efficiencies and cut costs, said Bryan Weech, livestock agriculture program director with World Wildlife Fund. Those efforts can also protect watersheds and improve soil health and water quality.

New NM law calls for agencies, tribes to cooperate

By Susan Montoya Bryan, Associated Press Writer

In the Contra Costa Times, Tri-Valley Herald and other papers, Tuesday, April 14, 2009

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.—Feelings of bitterness and mistrust have long permeated American Indians' relationship with government, but New Mexico hopes to change that with a new law that requires all state agencies to cooperate with tribal governments.

Indian leaders from New Mexico and elsewhere are excited about the state's expanded spirit of cooperation, but it's already being put to the test by a plan for a \$3 billion coal-fired power plant on the nation's largest Indian reservation.

The Navajo Nation is partnering with Houston-based Sithe Global Power to build the Desert Rock Energy Project in northwestern New Mexico. The tribe says the plant would bring in millions of dollars in annual revenue and provide hundreds of jobs on a reservation where more than half of the people are unemployed.

But Gov. Bill Richardson, the New Mexico Environment Department and others are critical of the plant, saying it would further degrade air quality in the Four Corners region—home to two existing coal-fired plants.

State and Navajo leaders had two formal meetings last year about Desert Rock before talks ended.

Now, with Richardson signing the state-tribal collaboration act just weeks ago, the Navajos are waiting to see how New Mexico will implement the new law.

George Hardeen, a spokesman for Navajo President Joe Shirley Jr., said Desert Rock is "the most important and biggest project Navajo Nation has ever undertaken."

"Because of that," Hardeen said, "the Navajo Nation hopes the new collaboration act is more than just a fleeting hyperbolic moment for the governor and more significant than the creation of a department of wishful thinking."

Richardson has called the act "a landmark bill," saying it will strengthen the relationship between the state and the 22 sovereign tribes, pueblos and nations within its boundaries.

Some officials see the act as a model for ushering in a new era in state-tribal relations.

"It really is unique. There is no other law like this in the United States," said Alvin Warren, secretary of the New Mexico Department of Indian Affairs and a member of the Santa Clara Pueblo.

Joe Garcia, president of the National Congress of American Indians and governor of Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo in New Mexico, described it as a "guiding light for the rest of the country."

The law requires 34 state agencies to appoint at least one tribal liaison. They also must provide special training for employees who work with tribes, and they have to develop policies promoting better communication with tribes by the end of the year.

The law also mandates an annual state-tribal summit between the New Mexico governor and Indian leaders.

Tribal leaders, including Navajo officials, have already met to plan for the first summit, Hardeen said.

The law follows years of work to better state-tribal relationships. It started in 2003 with the elevation of Indian Affairs to a cabinet-level department. In 2005, Richardson signed an executive order establishing a state-tribal consultation pilot program.

The next step was to establish consistency across state government, Warren said.

"It isn't just symbolic," he said of the new law. "There's a practicality to the governor meeting on an annual basis with all of the tribal leaders. There's a practicality to having tribal liaisons as a permanent part of each cabinet agency."

Navajo officials hope the new statutory requirement for cooperation will help smooth over hard feeling regarding the state's position on the Desert Rock project. The tribe complained that New Mexico officials often criticize the project without warning tribal officials.

"The very least the state environment secretary can do or the governor can do is pick up the phone to let the Navajo president know he's about to be blasted in tomorrow's newspaper," Hardeen said.

Milton Bluehouse Jr., the department's tribal liaison, said his office tries to get as much information to tribal officials as possible. The department invited tribes to help update the department's consultation policy and held meetings to discuss environmental justice with tribal leaders, he said.

"I don't think it could be said that we have overlooked our efforts in conducting tribal outreach," he said.

Bluehouse, who used to work for the Navajo Nation, acknowledged that historically, state-tribal relationships haven't been as good as they could have been. However, he said those lessons were what led New Mexico lawmakers and tribal leaders to overwhelmingly support the collaboration act.

Warren said he sees the act as an investment that will allow the state and the tribe to pool their resources and advocate for policies that will benefit everyone in New Mexico.

"Nobody expects that the state and each tribe will agree on every issue," he said. "... What this symbolizes and what this places in statute is that it will be the focus of state and tribal governments to build long-term relationships."

[State Editorial Roundup in Contra Costa Times, Tri-Valley Herald and other papers Tuesday, April 14, 2009:](#)

The Dallas Morning News on the Senate's clean-air plan:

Sen. Kip Averitt has shown himself to be well suited to the job of chairing the Natural Resources Committee, laying out forward-looking plans to protect the state's environment. He has filed smart legislation to protect our air and to finance the Texas water plan.

The Waco Republican deserves high marks for his efforts. But his colleagues have earned only half-credit, moving ahead with clean-air legislation while stalling out on water.

The Senate gave tentative approval last week to SB 16, a sweeping bill that would make needed changes to Texas' approach to energy and the environment. The legislation tackles both micro and macro issues, from upgrading the appliance in our homes to preparing for federal carbon regulations.

And while a single bill can't make all the needed reparations to the state's lax environmental laws, this would move the ball forward on several key fronts:

The legislation would require new buildings to be more energy-efficient. Dallas is ahead of the curve with its own green building codes, but this would bring the rest of the state up to speed.

It would close a gaping loophole in the permitting process for power plants, finally forcing regulators to consider the cumulative impact industry has on air quality, instead of awarding each permit in a vacuum.

Rebates would be offered for plug-in hybrid vehicles an idea pushed by Gov. Rick Perry. And a program that takes polluting clunkers off the road would be continued.

Grants would be available to Texans who replace old air conditioners and refrigerators.

Notably, the bill also would require state agencies to prepare for federal regulation of global warming gases. So far, Texas has been more of an obstructionist than a participant in this process.

Averitt managed to include something for almost everyone in this multifaceted clean-air plan, which has won support on both sides of the aisle. He addresses consumer issues as well as industry regulations, including a number of carrots as well as a couple of sticks.

The Senate's budget already includes money to fund projects in SB 16. So, once the legislation gains final approval in the Senate, the onus will be on the House to ensure that Texas' air is protected.

[Editorial in the Hanford Sentinel, Monday, April 13, 2009:](#)

Another View: Without higher gas taxes, 'cash for clunkers' won't work

Car sales in Germany jumped an astonishing 40 percent in March, thanks in large part to a "cash for clunkers" program in which the government gave those handing over old-model cars roughly \$5,000 toward the purchase of newer, more fuel-efficient vehicles. Lawmakers in the United States have crafted similar proposals, hoping both to provide a boost to the U.S. auto industry and to spur sales of environmentally friendlier cars. But even the best of these proposals is not likely to provide the punch of the German initiative.

A bill co-sponsored by Sens. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., Charles E. Schumer, D-N.Y., and Susan Collins, R-Maine, offers the most sensible approach. Buyers are eligible for vouchers worth \$2,500 to \$4,500 toward the purchase of a new car if they turn in older vehicles that get less than 18 miles to the gallon. The older vehicles would be junked and turned into scrap. The new car must have a sticker price of less than \$45,000 and surpass fuel economy standards by 25 percent. Buyers may also apply the vouchers to fuel-efficient used cars manufactured after 2003. Vouchers could also be used for participating in public transportation programs. A similar proposal in the House provides credits only for vehicles made or assembled in North America; such a provision is problematic because it could violate free-trade agreements.

But would even a perfectly crafted program trigger the kind of spending spree witnessed in Germany? Unlikely, largely because of simple economics and human nature. In 1999, the German government began to gradually impose an additional tax on each gallon of gas beyond the existing tax; today, the additional tax stands at 50 cents, and high gas prices push consumers toward fuel-efficient cars or public transportation even without additional incentives. Yet the Germans did not stop there. The country announced at the start of this year that it would implement in July a new tax based on carbon dioxide emissions; the larger the car and the greater its emissions, the higher the tax. No wonder, then, that Germans flocked to take advantage of the cash-for-clunkers deal before driving becomes even more expensive.

The psychology and politics are completely different in the United States, where it is still relatively cheap to drive. Gas prices here briefly flirted with the \$5-per-gallon mark in some parts of the country last summer but have again stabilized around \$2 per gallon. Talk of any new taxes -- even a gradual pennies-to-the-gallon gas tax -- is anathema to most politicians on both the left and right.

Some consumers will buy more fuel-efficient vehicles simply for the environmental benefits, but most of us need either bigger savings or a bigger hammer in the form of taxes to turn us away from our cherished sport-utility vehicles. A cash-for-clunkers program would be a good first step toward revamping the nation's fleet, but without other incentives and other pressures such an initiative is not apt to have a great impact in the United States.

This editorial appeared in The Washington Post.

[Sacramento Bee, Commentary, Tuesday, April 14, 2009](#)

My View: Energy-saving carbon cap offers a bonus: More jobs

By Dave Yarnold

Amid all the news reports about failed financial gadgets like credit-default swaps and mortgage-backed securities, you'll find an occasional story that reveals the human face of this recession.

Here's one example from Stark County, Ohio: Almost 700 people recently lined up to apply for a job as a junior high school janitor. Officials in Stark County were surprised that so many seasoned workers, including people in their late 40s and 50s, were vying for a \$15-an-hour job with little room for professional growth or promotion. But in a county with more than 10 percent unemployment, the job hunters had few other options.

Ironically, while those 700 people were standing in line for a single job, few people were paying attention to a company a stone's throw away that could soon be providing job hunters with a lot more options. 3-D Service, in Massillon, Ohio, does repair work and maintenance on wind turbine power systems and components. It's one of hundreds of companies across Ohio, and thousands across America, that are part of the "new energy future" that President Obama and major business leaders keep talking about. These companies are poised for rapid growth – if America passes a federal law to cap global warming pollution, a move that will reinvent our energy supply and create new businesses to cater to it.

A carbon cap will spur development of renewable energy sources like solar and wind power, as well as new technology to clean or conserve the energy we have now. Manufacturing states in the Midwest and South will see some of the biggest benefits of a carbon cap, because the new businesses will all need newly built parts. A single wind turbine requires 8,000 different parts, for example. Those parts – from bolts, copper wiring and ball bearings to steel towers and blades – can most efficiently be manufactured by American factories that will only need minor renovations to handle the job.

LessCarbonMoreJobs.org is a new Web site that maps potential job growth from a carbon cap. It shows that more than 1,200 companies in 12 states are poised to grow. New companies are being added daily as the new future of jobs becomes clearer. And more states will be added soon. Other companies on the list make energy-efficient building materials, windows and appliances; they create soy-based diesel fuel; they build bolts for wind turbines or manufacture solar film. These are real companies that are already up and running, but the flood of private investment that a cap on carbon emissions will unleash will allow these companies to grow – and will help launch many more companies like them.

Not surprisingly, longtime opponents of taking action against global warming argue that a cap will hurt traditional businesses and could raise power bills for consumers. Not surprisingly, they never mention the benefits of a carbon cap, or the costs of doing nothing and suffering the severe damage caused by climate change. They also use some very unreliable figures to scare the public. Actually, estimates based on Department of Energy data indicate that a cap on carbon pollution will cost just 10 cents a day on the average American household's utility bills.

Developing renewable energy is a core driver for rebuilding our economy. The United States has a chance to launch an entirely new industry. We can create new technologies that we can export to countries like China and India for a change, and we can create thousands of new jobs in the process. While we're at it, we can make America energy-independent, clean up our air and water, and stop global warming.

You'll hear opponents of climate change legislation talk about the "burden" that capping carbon will place on our economy.

However, they won't talk about the burden that 10 percent-plus unemployment puts on our communities, or the burden that standing in line with 700 other job applicants puts on individuals. Clinging to the status quo won't get us out of this recession. A new energy economy is our best

chance for a better future, and we can't afford not to take this opportunity. We need Congress to pass a cap on carbon.

[Sacramento Bee, Letter to the Editor, Tuesday, April 14, 2009](#)

Bring back 1990s electric cars

Here are some suggestions that may be considered for using less oil, reducing global warming and air pollution.

Start producing, promoting and selling the electric cars that GM, Honda and Toyota made and leased – then pulled out of the market – in the 1990s. If the government can enforce catalytic converters, then it can surely do this.

Secondly: Develop, produce and sell vehicles that have the engine stop when the vehicle does. This technology is not new. Gas-powered golf carts used this before electric carts were introduced. This would reduce much air pollution in urban areas, where much stop-and-go driving is done. It should include diesel vehicles as well.

Verner Larsen, Sacramento

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses climate change and its effects on the state of Baja California, Mexico. It will increase temperatures from 1-4 Celsius and decrease precipitation, increasing air pollution. For more information on this or other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

Afectará al Estado cambio climático

Magdalena López

La Cronica, Monday, April 13, 2009

Con el cambio climático gradualmente aumentará la temperatura de 1 a 4 grados centígrados y disminuirán las precipitaciones en lo que resta de este siglo de acuerdo a un estudio que inició a nivel estatal un grupo de investigadores de la UABC, Colef y el Cisese.

El investigador y coordinador de la primera parte de este estudio por parte de la UABC, Rafael García Cueto, informó que desde septiembre del año pasado, a petición de la Secretaría de Protección al Ambiente iniciaron este estudio de escenarios del cambio climático.

El fin es conocer la temperatura, precipitación y la elevación del nivel del mar; y a partir de ahí analizar qué impactos se tienen en diferentes sectores como es el sector ganadero, industrial, turismo, biodiversidad y desarrollo urbano.

Mencionó que hasta la fecha los cerca de 40 ó 50 investigadores presentaron en febrero los resultados de la primera parte de este estudio, que arrojan los mismos resultados que a nivel mundial:

Que habrá un incremento de las temperaturas y decrecerán las lluvias en el Estado.

“Esto quiere decir que lo que es el ciclo hidrológico se va a ver perturbado, es decir vamos a tener mayores temperaturas, mayor evaporación y al mismo tiempo vamos a tener menores fuentes de agua de manera natural.

“Todo eso no nos pinta un panorama muy halagador sobre todo para la parte agropecuaria, de salud, tampoco ni para la industria”, expresó.

García Cueto indicó que es ahí precisamente donde entran los especialistas del área agrícola, desarrollo urbano y vivienda, de gases de efecto invernadero, entre otros, quienes se encargarán de estudiar los impactos que se van a producir en cada uno de esos sectores.

Estimó que para septiembre u octubre ya se tengan resultados preliminares de esta segunda parte del estudio a fin de lograr reducir los gases de efecto invernadero.

Es necesario, comentó, voltear a ver las energías alternativas como es la solar que se tiene aquí todo el año, la maremotriz o la eólica que producirá el Gobierno, las cuales aunque son caras en un principio a la larga resultan económicas por su durabilidad.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses the most ecological airline in the world. Nature Air airlines is the first to achieve this goal— to compensate for 100% of its carbon emissions from flight operations.](#)

La aerolínea más ecológica del mundo Nature Air, la primera en lograrlo

AFP

Univision, Monday, April 13, 2009

SAN JOSÉ, Costa Rica - "Si emitimos, compensamos" es el lema de Nature Air, compañía aérea costarricense, que la ha llevado a convertirse en la aerolínea más ecológica del mundo.

"Turismo ecológico", "responsabilidad", "carbono cero" son las palabras que más se oyen en esta pequeña compañía, fundada por el estadounidense Alex E. Khajavi en agosto del 2001, que vuela a 17 destinos, uno en Panamá, 14 de ellos a menos de 5 kilómetros de un parque nacional.

Carbono cero

"Compensamos el 100 por ciento del carbono que emitimos en cada vuelo", explica a la AFP Alexi Huntley, hijo del fundador y gerente comercial de Nature Air.

Es cierto que tanto los destinos en un país que ha hecho del turismo ecológico su principal atractivo internacional, y el hecho de que el 78 por ciento de los 145 mil pasajeros que utilizaron sus pequeños aviones bimotor Dash-6 Twin Otter el pasado año fueran a un parque nacional contribuyen a poner en marcha esta "cultura" de empresa.

Pero sobre todo en Nature Air pretenden convertirse en la voz de la conciencia de todas las aerolíneas: "si nosotros lo hacemos ¿por qué ustedes no lo pueden hacer también?", dice Huntley, antes de precisar: "podemos ser la primera, pero no la única" que compensan en su totalidad sus emisiones de carbono.

Desde 2004, antes de que mucha gente supiera lo que significa "cambio climático", la compañía ha entregado unos \$78,600 al Fondo Nacional de Financiamiento Forestal (FONAFIFO) del ministerio del Ambiente costarricense por las 29.600 toneladas de CO2 que han emitido sus aviones, para proteger unas 245 hectáreas en la Península de Osa en manos privadas, y en el corredor biológico de Piedras Blancas, en el suroeste del país.

Porque "la mayoría de la deforestación está sucediendo en propiedades privadas. Es ilegal cortar árboles de bosque primario pero está sucediendo", dice Huntley.

La buena noticia es que cada vez hay más propietarios que quieren participar en el programa, aunque son más que los inversionistas dispuestos a financiar la conservación, pese a que unas 65 empresas colaboran en esta iniciativa, 45 de ellas turísticas.

Tanto los ingenieros forestales de FONAFIFO en tierra como los pilotos de Nature Air desde el aire monitorean el bosque antes de pagar: "Si la finca está protegida, se paga", es la política de la casa, que prefiere conservar más de lo que emite para tener "un colchón de seguridad".

Un turismo ecológico

A diferencia de otras compañías aéreas que compensan por pasajero y le hacen pagar a éste por la protección del medio ambiente, la política de Nature Air es compensar por el 100 por ciento de las emisiones de carbono con sus propios recursos.

"No podemos disculpar ni justificar que si sólo hemos vendido el 60 por ciento vamos a compensar por el 60 por ciento", dice Huntley, quien asegura que "la mayoría de la gente cuando

se compra el tiquete no sabe que está compensando el 100 por ciento de las emisiones carbono del vuelo".

En tierra, toda la flotilla de vehículos y máquinas de la compañía funcionan con aceites reciclados de fritura provenientes de restaurantes.

A través del programa "Nature Kids", la compañía también financia la enseñanza del inglés en cuatro escuelas en la Península de Osa a niños sin recursos, gracias a las donaciones de los pasajeros, que son en el 60 por ciento estadounidenses.

"El éxito de Nature Air es que no tenemos la experiencia de aviación, venimos más de la industria turística por lo que tenemos más la visión de los viajeros. Somos viajeros", resume Huntley.

Un éxito que se puede ampliar si en menos de 12 meses ponen en marcha su plan de abrir más destinos a Panamá e iniciar vuelos a Nicaragua, Guatemala, Honduras y "tal vez" Colombia.

Todo un desafío en esta época de crisis en que han perdido el 15 por ciento de los turistas, el 25 por ciento de Estados Unidos.