

# Technology, not government, can fix climate change

Michael Costello/Lewiston Tribune

Among the reasons that I doubt the perils of global warming is that global warm mongers don't seem to believe it themselves.

And no, I'm not just talking about Barack Obama sending a Boeing 747 across the country to fly "Bill Nye the Science Guy" back to the East Coast for a brief speech on global warming. After which speech, Nye flew back on the same plane. That amounted to four cross-country flights by a 747 for a speech that lasted just a few minutes. The carbon footprint of those few words would be measured in tons per syllable.

And I'm not talking about Nancy Pelosi demanding that the Air Force provide her with a 757 for her to commute back and forth between San Francisco and Washington, D.C. Her prodigious alcohol consumption during those flights left a significant carbon footprint, too.

No, I'm talking about the unserious solutions that the global warm mongers advocate. Their solutions all involve some kind of punitive tax or expansion of government authority. As the old saying goes, when the only tool you have is a hammer, the challenge is to make every problem look like a nail.

Gov. Jay Inslee is attempting to impose onerous taxes and a cap-and-trade system that would cripple Washington's economy. If his plans achieved all that he hopes, the climate models favored by global warm mongers predict the effect would be in the range of a thousandth of a degree by 2100.

In fact, if all the policies advocated by warm mongers were implemented, the most optimistic result would be a slight slowing in the rate of temperature rise. What the warm mongers propose would simply postpone by a few years all of the horrors they claim are now imminent.

What they refuse to consider are solutions that are both technologically feasible and would significantly reduce carbon dioxide emissions. Those alternatives are nuclear power and hydroelectric. Environmentalists vehemently oppose both. But if they really believed that burning fossil fuels is bringing us to the brink of the apocalypse, then wouldn't they relax their opposition?

If Inslee really wants to write his name in the Global Warm Monger Hall of Fame, he might take another path less traveled by environmentalists. And that would be remediation.

Environmental engineers have proposed several remediation strategies that have drawn the ire of warm mongers. One involves using genetically modified poplar trees. These trees grow so rapidly that, by one calculation, planting such trees in an acreage equivalent to South Dakota would, in a couple of decades, sequester all of the carbon dioxide emitted by the U.S. since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. That may sound like a lot of land, but it's comparable to

the acreage of wetland destruction that would have been required to achieve Obama's goal for growing biodiesel-producing algae.

In 2012, he boasted that algal biodiesel could replace a small fraction of the oil we now use. Accomplishing even this modest goal would require the destruction of wetlands equivalent to the area of Arkansas. Just this last summer, Obama's Environmental Protection Agency approved rules for generating algal biodiesel.

Another solution is iron fertilization of tropical oceans. About 30 years ago, oceanographer John Martin proposed that if vast nutrient-rich zones of tropical oceans were fertilized with iron, they would bloom with carbon-fixing diatoms. These diatoms sequester carbon dioxide as insoluble calcium carbonate that would sink to the ocean floor.

A few experiments were conducted with promising results. But every experiment had to be conducted in secret to evade environmentalists who attempted to sabotage the experiments.

And most recently, nanoengineers at the University of California-San Diego have created carbon-capturing nanobots. When released in seawater, these nanobots, which could theoretically draw their power from naturally occurring nutrients in the water, captured 88 percent of dissolved carbon dioxide in just five minutes. As with the diatoms, the carbon was trapped in calcium carbonate that simply sinks to the ocean floor.

"In the future, we could potentially use these micromotors as part of a water treatment system, like a water decarbonation plant," said Kevin Kaufmann, one of the nanobots co-developers. "If the micromotors can use the environment as fuel, they will be more scalable, environmentally friendly and less expensive."

If Inslee sincerely fears global warming, he should ditch his tax schemes and get behind nuclear, hydroelectric and carbon capture technologies.

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