

"SHOULD AULD NEWSLETTERS BE FORGOT . . .?" PROBABLY. . . . SO LONG, AULD MAN. HERE COMES THE KID IN DIAPERS.

1. NYT 8/30 - HEY, ENERGY SECTOR: THINK ABOUT THIS: Logistically thinking, you're in the right spot. The Gulf coast links you with both inland and offshore gas and oil resources and Caribbean and Atlantic shipping channels. Unfortunately, though, you've had and will be getting more and worse hurricanes, floods and sea surges. These have been and will continue to be followed by refinery and chemical plant shutdowns, extreme water pollution, fuel price increases and more. These disasters give a leg-up to renewables which are less vulnerable and more easily fixable. What would it cost to harden your infrastructure compared to moving, say, to the Eastern seaboard? It looks like every TX and LA refinery is partly or completely shut down with either damage or safety concerns, so they're no longer producing 2.6 bbl/day. When you're up and running, will the ports of Houston and Corpus Christi be able to handle exports? Even inland consignees would be affected. > Would you be welcome elsewhere? You've grown so much and so long that oil and gas have become for you a way of life for generations. . . . Worth thinking about?

2. NYT 9/1 - GEORGIA STILL THINKING NUKE: The rest of the U.S. and most recently SC have given up and switched and gone to solar or gas plants. Not GA. It's planning to complete one and build another near Augusta [A. W. Vogle, abandoned by Westinghouse] for \$19B and to open in 2021 and 2022. It's not for sure yet. It depends on assured federal tax credits for the new one and \$3.7B from bankrupt Toshiba [Westinghouse] for the stalled one.. > China and Russia are active in nuclear. China is building 20 . > Ernest Muniz, Obama's Energy Secretary, said we'll be losing a valuable tool in taming climatic change, and fears giving the reins to China and Russia will weaken non-proliferation standards. > 20% of our power supply still comes from nuclear plants, but the projections is that it will be 10% by 2050 as older ones are closed.

3. NYT 9/1 - op ed - HARVEY'S COST: Writer: Sociology Professor, London School of Economics: We don't know yet, but it will be big, big, BIG - and lingering. The effects on homeowners, insurance companies and businesses will be painful; some will go under. > There will be more Harveys. The writer suggests that before we rebuild, there should be a "green New Deal", environmental Keynesianism, an expansion of expenditures to rebuild right. Take into account sea rise and more flooding, provide a bigger safety net for the poor, more public transportation, sturdier home retrofits. "A new New Deal commits us to care for one another after the disaster has passed."

4. Merc 9/1 - BROWN LEAVING TOWN: To Russia for an economic forum with Pacific nations about climate change. Putin had the idea in 2015.

5. A. GASOLINE SUPPLY: Gov. Abbott said there's enough gasoline in TX or on the way to meet all foreseeable needs.

5.B. GASOLINE SUPPLY: Energy Secretary Perry released 500K barrels of gasoline from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve for TX.

6. NYT 9/3 - ELECTRIC CABS IN LONDON: They plan charging stations outside new cab stands near Lloyds and Macquarie Group. This is an attempt to hold down London's smog. They'll be fast-charge 30 minutes. For all the EV cabs they'll need 150.

7. Merc 9/3 - SURPRISE! MORE HEAT: We've always had heat waves. Expect more in the future, until the effects of our efforts to reduce emission of fossil fuel fumes begin to show up. We've been having double "record daily high temperatures as record daily low temperatures". So far this year there've been 4 times as many record high days than cold days. By 2050 this computes to 20 times more record hots than colds; by 2100 50 times. What does hotter do? More droughts, worse hurricanes, more droughts and storm surges.

8. NYT 9/3 - SCIENCE'S VIEW OF HARVEY: Writers a Stanford senior research scientist and Director of Environment Assessment Facility, and a Ph. D. candidate in environment.: What about Harvey? Between the

extremes of "climate change done it" and "there's nothing we can do about it" we can examine how much we contribute and what we can do to mitigate before Harvey II. Climate change doesn't cause it; it amplifies it. Bigger and worse. > Our actions boost it. We know about GHG emissions and the way they trap heat and create heat waves longer and hotter, more extreme rain and storm surges. "Unprecedented is increasingly the norm." > It's important where we build homes, plant crops, place roads and bridges and industries, and don't put asphalt where there should be soaker fields. [The Texas Medical Center had floodgates and above-ground generators and could operate all through Harvey - but it was pretty inaccessible because surrounding streets were flooded.] > Some long-range mitigations: Reform flood insurance funding and premium costs to recognize rising threats of rising water. This in itself would steer construction away from danger. Another: Over time, buy back flood-prone land and restore it to open space. (This has been done a little in Harris County TX and Fairbanks AK.) "With available tools and an eye toward the future, we can limit the amount of climate change . . . minimize the risks . . . and build a resilient future." [Opinion: Too "academic"? Remember, Scrooge holds the purse strings and Scrooge is writing the carol. Is he perspicacious and convincible? . . . Isn't it the dickens? . . . Merry Christmas.]

Vol 2, Newsletter # 99

1.PAW 8/25/PADW 9/2 - THE DEVIL FINDS WORK FOR IDLING ENGINES: There is growing support for a Palo Alto ordinance to discourage car idling beyond 2-3 minutes. (Not when in traffic.) They have them in Minneapolis, Salt Lake City and Ann Arbor. Los Gatos, Los Altos and Saratoga are thinking about a ban. The principal idlers seem to be parents picking up kids, construction and delivery trucks, fast food drive-throughs - (better yet, park and enter), engine warm-ups, city buses and corporate buses. [It's recognized that public safety vehicles and others may have valid reasons to be idle. The city wants to reduce GHG emissions by 80% by 2030. This may help by an estimated 6.2 tons. [A national reduction would be about 30M tons.] > Costs are minimal - signs at strategic locations, maybe a few public service blurbs, etc. Unless there is an unlikely police force increase, strict enforcement will likely be earnestly seldom. [Vide the ban on gas-powered lawn equipment.] > An ordinance is being drafted.

2. Merc 8/26 - NEW FLOOD PROTECTION POLICY: "Spread it out, slow it down, sink it in, give the river more room." So says the CA Natural Resources Agency. This will start in the Central Valley, the 500 miles between Mt. Shasta and Bakersfield. There'll be more provision of floodplains and wetlands. (The Yolo Bypass is a good example - good for rice farmers, migratory birds and baby salmon.) > Farmers, environmentalists, and outdoor sports people are enthusiastic. > The former policies of higher levees and "get it down to the ocean fast" will be changing. > This will be Step One - \$89M to accomplish. Following steps will include finding funding sources for the full plan - \$26B.

3. NYT 8/28 - editorial - STATES THINK BIG; FEDS VERY LITTLE: The feds think minimalist ["the know-littles and do-nothings"]; the states forge ahead. CA leads overall; now CT, MA, NY, DE, ME, MD, NH, RI, NH, and VT <1> [The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative] have joined to cut GHG emissions another 30% by 2030, on top of the 40% already cut since 2009. This has been done while not hurting consumers or the economy in the pocket book. This is the cap and trade model. The \$2.7B raised has been plowed back into green substitutes and low income assistance, while utility rates have fallen an average of 3.4%. Health Improvement has saved an estimated \$6B. <1> NJ (Christie) dropped out. He's termed out now; either of his two successor candidates will make RGGI the Gang of Eleven.)] > If the VA Dem. gubernatorial candidate wins make that Gang of Twelve. . . . And maybe PA. > The progress made to date has elevated Transportation to the Top Polluter list instead of Power Plants.

4. NYT 8/29 - Milder winters move southern pine beetles north: Delaware used to be the state that said, "Ils non passeront pas!" to them. Now NJ, NY and part of New England are brushing up their French to say "Bienvenue!". Future schedule: 2020: Atlantic Coast up to Nova Scotia. 2050: Pitch pine forest from eastern Ohio to southern ME. 2080: Large areas in the northeastern U.S. and into Ontario and Quebec. > Annual average temperatures have increased only 1 degree F, but the coldest nights (the nights that kill) have warmed 7 degrees F. > They've had some success in slowing the spread if they cut down infected trees, and thinning some of the still-healthy. This leaves those remaining stronger. They sell the fallen trees to loggers and paper mills and make a buck. In the North there's no equivalent market. (Long Island has cut 15K +.)

5. NYT 8/29 - PLASTIC BAG BAN WITH A VENGEANCE: Try to make or sell them in Kenya and you can get 4 years in the slammer or get fined \$19K-\$38K. Kenya joins 40 other countries in efforts to tax, limit or prohibit them. (HI and CA do this in the U.S.) The Kenyan government urges reusable cloth bags,> Worldwide they estimate 8M tons of bags a year get into the ocean. By 2050 there'll be more bags than fish.

6. Merc 8/30 - op ed - "CAP AND TRADE FEEDS FUNDING FRENZY AMONG POLITICIANS": Dan Walter, columnist for CalMatters: Where the proceeds go: About 60% goes to mandatory projects - 25% to HSR, 20% to housing. The remaining 15% is not detailed, but some goes to wildfire protections, relieving the present property tax and the expansion of a business tax credit. > Walters is skeptical about cap and trade. A. It contributes only 20% to carbon reductions, and the businesses buying credits often pass their costs on to consumers. It adds about 11 cents/gal. to gas prices. B. HSR: It won't reduce carbon much. During construction it will release more. Even when operating it will reduce auto traffic only an estimated 1%. [Opinion: How about air traffic?] C. The goal is to reduce carbon by more than 40% beyond 2020's levels: That's a goal of 3 metric tons per person; almost 4 times less than today's tonnage. Realistic?

7. Merc 8/31 - SAVE THE SALMON: A public/private partnership has plans for a long-term rescue. The Central Valley Habitat Partnership (21 members: state, federal, wildlife agencies, and private groups - conservationists, farmers, water suppliers, and fishing interests - was approved by the CA secretary for natural resources. The CV rivers and tributaries are #2 for salmon after the Columbia. The last 3 years have been dismal: Chinook now only 230K in the ocean; once, in good years, 800K. The group plans a "one stream mile at a time" approach, says NOAA. There are no details except a statement that there will be riverbank, side channel and floodplain restoration of habitats.

8. Merc 8/31 - NEW ELECTRIC SEMI-TRUCK: Someone beat Tesla to the punch. Cummins (Indiana), maker of diesel and gasoline engines, has a lithium-ion battery pack for sale to bus operators and truckers in 2019. It's the Urban Hauler Trucker, called Aeos; will go 100 miles, with spare sets for 200 more; designed for short hauls; charges in an hour. > Tesla plans a September unveiling for its battery, and hopes to expand into Canada and Mexico.

9. NYT 8/31 - BRAZIL - NO MINE: A judge overturned the presidential decree that rescinded protection for a 17,770 sq. mi. rain forest. He said this was a matter for Congress for decide. The government will appeal.

10. SIGNS OF THE TIMES - LETTERS:

A. NYT 8/31 - HOUSTON: Trump says he wants Houston's restoration to be a model for the future - "the way to do it." Not likely, if he continues to gut the EPA and the Clean Power Plan. Pro-coal and pro-oil policies will intensify future storms. He's likely to be seen "as the person most responsible for bringing utter disaster on America and on all humanity."

B.em, NYT 8/31 - SMART INFRASTRUCTURE: "... begins with the understanding that conserving our coastal wetlands and creating urban parks ..."

Vol 2, Newsletter # 98

1. NYT 8/23 - op ed - MAKING AMERICA POLLUTED AGAIN: Columnist Paul Krugman: Although Trump's agenda seems to be spinning its wheels, his EPA agenda (Pruitt) chugs along almost inexorably. Pruitt is successfully sabotaging his agency's mission. The progress that had been made over 30 years can be and is being reversed simply by starving his agency by budget cuts and lack of personnel. "When it comes to environmental policy, Trump will change America - and his legacy will literally be toxic.", says Krugman. [Opinion: I see a busy beaver busily chewing through a growing tree, and another, and another. . . . They die.]

2. Merc 8/25 - op ed - SB 623: [see #97, 4 (8/26) - SB623 TO ASSURE CLEAN WATER:] Sen Monning (author of SB623) and Tom Steyer (financial backer): Why is it needed? We're the 6th largest world economy. One million people don't have safe drinking water. They live in low income communities and bottled water

ain't cheap. About 25% of schools in the Central Valley have to buy more bottled water and pay for more portable washrooms and fewer books. Not good.

3. Merc 8/25 - editorial - OROVILLE: The Dept. of Water Resources has been almost top secret hush hush about what went wrong, but has finally admitted that a lot went wrong, and has promised to be more transparent. . . . BUT - A. DWR didn't tell Oroville's police and fire departments about a generator fire at the spillway until a reporter inquired. B. There are reports that DWR is pressuring locals to sign a letter to the feds to delay relicensing until more is known about why the spillway collapsed. C. DWR dumped new spawning gravel, a minimum effort to save salmon, but said it would do more when it was relicensed. [See B. above.] So why delay relicensing, eh? D. Picky picky DWR took exception to a news story saying the Board of Consultants had "concerns" about some temporary roller-compacted gravel, saying "concerns" was subjective and over-stated.

4. Merc 8/27 - SOME EV ROAD TRIPS EASED; Cheaper, easier, less "range anxiety," There's a new charger network, Drive the ARC [Advanced Recharging Corridor] being set up by the state. This is part of the effort to get 1.5M EVs on the road by 2025. We need more chargers. > The money comes from a \$20M grant from Japan's research and development arm and Nissan and Kanematsu. Japan's motive is to strengthen relations between Japan and the U.S. and to improve energy conservation. > Charging is free if you have an app <1> and a common charger - [CHAdEM connector or Tesla cars with special adapter]. > All of the 50 new stations will be installed at 25 locations by the fall. Starting from Monterey they go north via Highways 1, 101, 680, 80 to Truckee (giving access to Lake Tahoe). The route loops back via 395 (?) [I don't have a map and don't know if you need 395 from Carson City to 50 back to Sacramento. > Chargers will be within half a mile of an off-ramp and in supermarket and coffee shop parking lots. > The more EVs proliferate, the more charging stations will be needed. VW has an \$800M plan [part of its fine]. Tesla has Superchargers exclusively for Tesla drivers in North America, Asia and Europe. (Buy a Tesla before 1/1/18 and you're hooked up for life)
<1> The app is used to find open stations and to estimate your cruising range.

5. NYT 8/27 - editorial - THE ARCTIC - WHAT'S GOING ON? A Russian tanker recently made a voyage sans ice breaker escort to the West Coast. Cargo? LNG - a fossil fuel contributing to warming. Putin benefits from easier access to Asian markets and 30% shorter time than via Suez. > A short trip means less fuel used. That's good. But more ship traffic can generate threats to the delicate Arctic. That's bad. > The Arctic Council (formed 1996) is supposed to make sure everything is peaceful and non-competitive, but it has no enforcement authority and specifically can't consider military matters. > Obama has pushed environmental concerns in the Council when he was around. Trump thinks "hoax" and Tillerson worked for ExxonMobil. > This bears [polar?] watching.

6. Merc 8/28 - Merc 8/28 - BOTT'S DOTS GOING: Those little yellow lane dividers are going. CA and 3 other states still use them. Gradually they'll be removed when repaving is scheduled. They'll be replaced by 6-inch (now 4-inch) striping that is more visible to AVs. And this is cheaper. . . . Stay awake. No more rumble.

7. ChrON 8/28 - CAP AND TRADE EXTENSION MAY HELP OIL AND AGRICULTURE: [see #96, 1 (8/25) same title:] The angry chair of the Senate Budget subcommittee said he will oppose the Air Resources Board's plan to give about \$300M to oil and agriculture. He hopes to fix next year's budget and unfound the idea by a 25% reduction in ARB's budget. > ARB quickly said it's not a done deal; just something they were considering. (Before the extension some allowances were scheduled to be phased out by 2021.. (The chairman also serves on the Environmental Quality Committee. He asks "How do we change behavior" [with free allowances in perpetuity]?)

8. NYT 8/28 - op ed - WHY THE BIG RUSH? Writer is a Yale research scholar and was an official in the Departments of Agriculture in the Clinton and Obama administrations, respectively. His thoughts: To try to sell far more oil right now while market prices are soft doesn't increase revenue very much, isn't necessary for national security and will probably gouge up Mother Nature. Zinke plans to do this on a rush basis - auctions every quarter, permits issued within 30 days. This leaves no time for proper environmental review. > Prices now are so low that only half of our public lands now under lease to energy companies are producing anything. About 7,950 permits are dormant. Last year only a third of the acreage being offered was bid on. > The

administration seems to be rushing things. The writer suggests slowing up, searching to find areas with the least conflicts with water, wild life and recreation. This would do less harm and elicit fewer lawsuits. Trying to achieve "energy dominance" is just a fire sale.

9. SIGNS OF THE TIMES - LETTERS:

Merc 8/28 - SB623: [see Para. 2 above] Writer is past president of the Association of CA Water Agencies and a board member of EBMUD. He thinks providing clean water is a good idea, but not this way. Water districts would become taxing agencies. [\$1 a month added to your water bill monthly.] Sending money to Sacramento without first considering local infrastructure funding needs is wrong. Water districts weren't consulted about the measure. > Better: Use the general fund, bonds or federal funds.

Vol 2, Newsletter # 97

1. Merc 8/ 23 - NO BART YET FOR MILPITAS AND BERRYESSA: The hope was for service by the end of the year; now it's June 2018. They decided this after reviewing testing still required and construction yet undone. But it's still on time and under budget.

2. Merc 8/23 - EXPANDING ECONOMY WILL SLOW POLLUTION DECLINE: Traffic congestion, more business and the housing shortage have slowed the rate of reduction, says Next 10, a nonpartisan monitor of the economy and the environment. The clean energy patent requests for San Jose, Santa Clara and Sunnyvale are exceeded only by S.F., and we are miles ahead of other states. > It looks like we'll be able to attain our 2020 goals. The next 10?

3. Chron 8/23 - COAL INDUSTRY'S RARE DISAPPOINTMENT: The coal folks were hoping for emergency relief because they are overburdened with environmental rules and market stresses. The news story did not precisely say what was hoped for, but it would have saved thousands of layoffs and putting pensions in jeopardy. Murray Energy's CEO says Trump personally promised him he'd be O.K., and overheard him instruct Secretary Perry. > For whatever reason, this didn't happen.

4. Chron 8/23 - editorial - SB623 TO ASSURE CLEAN WATER: In 2012 CA passed a first-in-the-nation new law guaranteeing safe and affordable drinking water. Big hat, no cattle, no funding however. We have lots of remote and poor little communities with contaminated ground water caused by agricultural runoff and naturally-occurring pollutants (arsenic). These result in cancer and "blue baby" syndrome, caused by nitrates in the water. > In 2014 we passed a water bond to fund the gap, but it unfortunately covered only capital improvements and not operating expenses. Now SB623 (Manning, D-Carmel). provides \$100M a year from money paid by agriculture for nitrate cleanup and by consumers (60 cents/70 cents) added to water bills. > Call your Sacramento legislators; "Please support SB623,"

5.A. Chron 8/23 - WARMING WATER MAKES KELP YELP: Kelp forests, a nursery for lobsters and juvenile fish, gets reduced down to a nub in global hot spots, such as the Mediterranean, southern Japan, Australia and part of the CA coast. As the forests wilt, seaweed and tropical fish come in and dine. > In CA our kelp has declined 90% from heat and sea urchins - much to the regret of abalone.

5. B. Chron 8/23 - MORE OCEAN WOE - TINY PLASTIC MUNCHIES: Plastic in salt water breaks down into little fragments. We find them in dead sea critters. Sea turtles eat plastic sandwich bags, mistaking them for jellyfish. Algae, bacteria and krill attached to plastic fragments and exuding a sulphur smell, are eaten by anchovies. > Scientists suspect this plastic diet reduces the speed of schools of fish, and also causes malnutrition. > There really no quick cure - besides keeping our junk out of the water.

6. Chron 8/24 - EXXON FLIM FLAM: Exxon Mobil has been accused of knowing the reality of climate change internally, while pooh-poohing it to consumers. > Two Harvard researchers have reviewed almost 200 documents of Exxon's research papers and public statements and concluded Exxon "misled the public." Their peer-reviewed findings in the journal Environmental Research Letters: 80% of their internal studies 1977-2014

acknowledged climate change was real and human-caused. 80% of their statements to the public expressed doubts. > An Exxon spokesman called their analysis "inaccurate and preposterous". He pointed to examples in Exxon's "advertorials" stating change "may pose legitimate long-term risks."

8. NYT 8/24 - ALASKAN PERMAFROST WARMS: In the sub-Arctic Yukon, 350 miles south of the Arctic Circle, the rate of warming is twice that of the rest of the world. The thawing permafrost, from 3 feet under the surface to perhaps 100+ feet, holds twice the amount of CO2 as is in the atmosphere. There's fear this thawing permafrost may disappear by mid-century. The CO2 and methane released by thawing is trapped in the atmosphere, adding to global warming and adding about 1.5B tons a year = a year's emissions in the continental U.S. > Scientists debate about how long it will be before all of Alaska's tundra thaws. There's so much of it that it will take several millennia. Still, in this little garden patch, "It's been in a freezer and that freezer is now turning into a refrigerator."

Vol 2, Newsletter # 96

1. Merc 8/18 - CAP AND TRADE EXTENSION MAY HELP OIL AND AGRICULTURE: The agreement passed by one vote. There had to be enough "give" in it to obtain the grumpy O.K. > When cap and trade began in 2013 the idea was to make it not too painful at first, so polluting industries (oil and gas, refineries, agriculture) received a lot of freebie credits. Oil and gas, the most risky category of polluters, received 100% exemption in perpetuity (and this will continue.) The less risky (refineries, other smokestack industries, canneries, wineries) were to have ended next year, but the extension now gives them perpetuity also.

2. NYT 8/18 - TAX REFORM AND CARBON TAX: Dem. Senators Whitehouse (RI) and Schatz (HI), some conservative supporters and some climate activists have their fingers crossed. They hope to use some of the estimated \$2.1T (over 10 years) income resulting from cutting the corporate tax rate, to fund a carbon fee and dividend. (Trump's Gary Cohn supports something similar. Trump, on the other hand, rejected the idea during the campaign. Grover Norquist says it's something to be considered. Former Secretary of State Jim Baker brought up the idea earlier this year; George Shultz favors it; so the idea has a little heft. But some conservative Dems might balk, so it's iffy.)

3. A. NYT 8/19 - CHLOROPYRIFOS - EPA'S "NEW DAY": A NYT FOIA request produced 700+ pages of EPA's internal documents revealing the background leading up to its decision not to ban the pesticide, contrary to what its scientists had recommended. (In 2000 it had been banned for domestic use, but not for agriculture.) EPA's Trump-appointed staff instructed the career staff to produce necessary documentation. > The American Farm Bureau Federation from WA met with EPA in March urging an overturn, claiming the link between childhood health and development issues was "unclear". At the meeting Pruitt said "This is a new day, new future for a commonsense approach to environmental protection." > Asked about these FOIA comments, EPA's spokeswoman replied, "Taking these emails out of context doesn't change the fact that we continue to examine the science surrounding chloropyrifos." > The EPA's chief of staff told the political staff he had "scared" the career staff in telling them explicitly how to write the decision. > EPA officials coordinated their efforts closely with WH and Department of Agriculture. > Environmental groups conclude this was an "ideological - not a health-based" decision.

3. B. Merc 8/20 - CA TAKES ACTION: Our state EPA has added chloropyrifos to the list of chemicals known to be harmful to humans. Also, it will require more distance from homes and schools before allowing application - from 150 feet to 450 feet. >The spray is used for 60 crops, including grapes, almonds and cotton. These draft rules will take effect in September; more will follow next year. > Farm interests say its use is declining but is still necessary; health interests call for a complete ban.

4. Merc 8/20 - editorial - TAX INCOME FOR CALTRAIN: The Merc supports Sen. Hill's (D-San Mateo) SB797, hoping it will pass in 2018 while electrification is still underway. It will provide an assured source of income. > There are 1.6M wage earners in the Caltrain corridor who produce 20% of the state's sale tax revenue and 13% of its GDP. > Let's do something that helps makes their commute easier and cleans the air to boot. (It needs a 2/3 vote.)

5. Chron 8/20 - STATE MONUMENT SHRINKAGE: There are 5 in CA that are under the microscope; more

than 2 dozen nationally. If all goes wrong, there is nothing that can be done legislatively to block it; only courts can do it. Facing surgery: Berryessa Snow Mountain (near Santa Rosa); Carrizo Plain (S.L.O. County); San Gabriel Mountains, (L.A. County); Giant Sequoia, (Tulare County); and Mojave Trails (includes historic Highway 66), <1> , plus a sliver of OR's Cascade-Siskiyou. > Zinke is supposed to determine if there was enough attention paid to those local and state interests that opposed the original sequestration. > In opposition to any reduction, AG Becerra will sue, claiming the Antiquities Act has no provision for a revocation, and the 1976 Land Policy Management Act prohibits Interior from revoking or modifying a Monument.

<1> This Monument includes the Eagle Mountain reservoirs project. [See #94, 1 (8/20) OPEN PIT MINE . . . HYDROPOWER]

6. Chron 8/21 - op ed - ADVICE ON FOSSIL FUEL STOCK TO S.F. RETIREMENT BOARD: "Don't sell your holdings. If you do, you'll be reducing the income of retirees - \$150B over 50 years and millions annually, and more if you dump your utility holdings as well. Your chief investment officer has given you his advice, and retention is the policy of most of the U.S. pension systems. > If you sell, others will buy, so you're not saving the environment. > Opinion: Does it matter that the writer is the senior Vice President of Operations and Public Affairs of the Independent Petroleum Association of America?]

7. Chron 8/21 - SHORT LIFE FOR CLIMATE CHANGE PANEL: R.I.P., 15-person Advisory Committee for the Sustained National Climate Assessment. Your members were academics and civic officials and business executives. You were not appointed until last summer. Your first report was in draft form and, indeed, may stay that way, because NOAA didn't renew your contract. [Johnny, we hardly knew ya.]

8. NYT 8/22 - RISKS OF MOUNTAIN TOP-REMOVAL COAL MINING: Interior told the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine to stop work on their risk study while the department reviewed its budget needs. Early last year WV had asked the Obama administration to look into the health effects of this mining method, especially the practice of dumping the overburden into valleys and their streams. > There is some evidence of greater health risk, including cancer and birth defects but these findings had been faulted for ignoring other variables such as diet, life styles and, broadly, poverty.

9. Merc 8/23 - RECORD PRICE FOR CAP AND TRADE PERMITS: \$648M this month! This was the first sale since the 2030 extension was passed. (Sales had slumped earlier because of uncertainty about its passage.) > The price for near-term emissions was \$14.75; for future emission allowances 20 cents less. These prices were about a dollar higher than the last quarterly sale. > Sixty percent of the money has already been set aside for HSR, public transit and housing. > This month they'll decide how to spend the remainder plus \$840M from prior sales.

10. Chron 8/24 - SMART START: First train was this afternoon at 12:49 p.m. from Sonoma County Airport Station. Today's ride was free. Half-fare through 9/4. [For schedule details: www.sonomamarintrain.org/schedules-fares.] Use Clipper cards or an app. [For details: [www.\(as above\)/node/91](http://www.(as above)/node/91).] Eats and drinks: You can bring your own food and drinks; no booze. Coffee, pastries, and beer and wine for sale aboard. Bikes: 24 per 2-car train = 48 (unless SRO passengers. Parking: Limited at stations; public garages nearby. For details: [www.\(as above\)/org/stations](http://www.(as above)/org/stations). > Ferry: Effective 9/7, G.G.Travel, free Wave shuttle from station to ferry.

Vol 2, Newsletter # 95

1. PADPost 8/16 - ANOTHER OBAMA MEASURE REVOKED: A new executive order undid a requirement that projects in flood plains using federal dollars should take notice in their design of possible damage from sea rise. Trump thought the danger was overblown. [Me? Worry?]

2. Merc 8/16 - NEW DAMS: Prop. 1, a \$2.7B bond measure, brings 12 new dam proposals. The 9-person Water Commission will decide by next June which ones should be funded. The 12 would cost \$13.1B, 5 times the money available, meaning the less desirables would have to scabble for funding from other sources, federal or local. > The 12: Sites Reservoir (Colusa County), Los Vaqueros (Contra Costa County), Pacheco Pass (Santa Clara County, Kern Fan, (Orange County), Miramar Reservoir - to receive treated waste water (San Diego County, Centennial Reservoir (Placer County). The other 4 are for unspecified water districts. > There

are also requests for funding for water recycling, desalination and water conservation.

3. NYT 8/16 - TRUMP ON INFRASTRUCTURE: To expedite infrastructure projects (still in utero) the president revealed a streamlined approval process. Besides the sea rise exemption [see Para. #1 above], his plan includes having a lead agency direct all environmental reviews and permit decisions within 90 days, followed by a 2-year window to process paper work for major projects. There are assurances that if a project that do not meet environmental safeguards it would not be approved. > Obama's 2015 Flood Rise Management Standard had been seen by Republican lawmakers as unduly costly and burdensome. It required construction using the best available climate change science in its specifications. Either those or, alternatively, building roads and railways 2 feet above the 100-year and, for critical buildings, raising them 3 feet higher or to the 500-year flood plain. (Private construction was exempt.) > Those who oppose the exemption fear it will cost more money in the long run to repair or prevent water damage than to do it during construction.

4. NYT 8/17 - op ed - CA'S CLIMATE LESSONS: Stanford Prof. N.S. Diffenbaugh, Earth System Science: The WH is now reviewing a new climate science report. The report predicts dangerous effects. [See #92, 2 (8/15) SCIENCE VS. FOSSIL FUELS:] CA's 20-year effort to study and to counter the damage has shown: A. You can reduce GHG and still prosper economically. B. To adapt to climate change you have to keep track of changes as they are occurring and forecast their future effects. C. You have to realize that poverty imposes more dire injury, so you must spare more money to low-income areas = environmental justice. > CA offer lessons on what has worked and what has to be done.

5. Chron 8/17 - FIAT CHRYSLER/BMW JOINS THE AV (Autonomous Vehicle) CROWD: Chrysler is way back in the pack for profits and future prospects. Now it has decided to join BMW and its Intel AV technology unit Mobileye, Success isn't assured. The old line carmakers are Fiat's competitors and they have the super large bankrolls of Silicon Valley.

6. Chron 8/17 - ANOTHER FEDERAL ROLLBACK: The Park Service removed the optional ban on sale of plastic water bottles in park facilities. The industry fought it, and it never quite worked because only water was banned and many other unbanned liquids (juice, soda pop) are potable and palatable. [Did I mention that the Deputy Interior Secretary used to work for a law firm that used to work for Nestle?]

7. Chron 8/18 - SMART SAYS "ALL ABOARD": The Federal Railroad Administration gave its O.K. to the Positive Train Control System. This allows SMART to start regular operations on Friday, August 5. > (This will be the first commute service since 1955, when the Golden Gate Bridge became too popular with commuters.

8. Chron 8/18 - RAIN GARDENS REDUCE STORM WATER RUNOFF: The S.F. PUC plans to install 8 strategically-located rain gardens. They'll collect rainwater before it hits the storm drains and return it to the ground. This will cost about \$57M, with ratepayers paying back low-interest loans. > S.F. storm water joins wastewater in one sewer system. In a heavy rain year this can cause untreated wastewater to enter the Bay - not good.> Outside the layered rock and soil catchment areas there is 16K sq. ft. of porous concrete. When the 8 are completed they'll collect about 17.3M gallons a year. > The city's long-range plan is to have enough rain gardens to collect 1B gallons a year.

9. Chron 8/18 - LONG-TERM COAST EROSION: Bigger and longer storms may, by the end of the century, erode 2/3s of SouCal's beaches. We know about Pacifica, we know Big Sur having slides, and that the Trinidad lighthouse is threatened. For the rest of the coast the damage is not so spectacular but is still sneakily sinister.

Vol 2, Newsletter # 94

1. Chron 8/11 - OPEN PIT MINE TO MORPH INTO HYDROPOWER: During WWII and well beyond, Kaiser mined iron ore near Joshua Tree National Park for its blast furnace at Fontana. Now Eagle Crest Energy wants to turn the 2 pits into reservoirs. There's a 1,400 foot elevation change between them - and water runs downhill. ECE wants to fill the upper one [it rains about 4 inches a year] and, using energy from nearby solar panels and wind turbines, pump in water to fill it. > You can't fill a big hole with 4 inches of rain a year. Where will the water come from? See below. > Once filled, how will they make electricity? In the late

afternoons, when energy demand is peaking, water would flow through tunnels through turbines and into the lower pit. In off-peak hours the water would be pumped back to the upper. > Water source: ECE plans to drill 3 wells in the Chuckawalla Valley aquifer. > All this water would, over the estimated 40 year life of the operation, take 100K acre-feet, equal to enough water for 200K homes. This aquifer is now also the water source for Joshua Tree Park, and the Park people worry that it might get pumped dry. [A 2012 research paper suggested the aquifer wasn't recharging as quickly as was thought and may be in overdraft. ECE doesn't agree, and replies that even so, they'd only be taking 1% from the aquifer.] >

Another problem - animals: Bighorn sheep graze there, and tortoises and other animals would be threatened by ravens who surely ["Don't call me Shirley." (from the movie "Airplane).] would flock to the lakes. Despite all these worries the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (Obama's) gave ECE a hydropower license in 2014, and this April the BLM said it would O.K. a right of way for 12 miles of transmission lines and a 15 mile underground water pipeline from the wells. No problema.

2. Merc 8/11 - FEWER FINES: A private environmental group, the Environmental Integrity Project, looked at 6 Trump-months of environmental civil penalties. Result: Less than half the levels of Obama, Bush and Clinton. Just 26 cases, with the take \$12M, 60% below the same periods for O., B., and C.. (For Obama: 134 cases and \$36M; for Bush: 31 and \$30M; and Clinton: 45 and \$25M. > There were also lowballs in the amount of cleanup called for. [Betcha didn't know the head of the EIP was the former director of EPA's enforcement office under Obama and Bush.]

3. Merc 8/12 - NORWAY AND ARCTIC DRILLING: Not so fast! Norway's unions and businesses, (Labor and Conservative parties) have long wanted to drill in the Arctic's Lofoten islands. The area is a natural wonder, with the largest cold-water coral, 70% of the fish caught in the surrounding seas, and a huge seabird colony. > How much oil there is is in dispute. The government says 1.3M bbls; the industry more than 3B. Norwegian oil pumped has declined 12% since 2004. Fears of an oil spill and, more recently, fear of international criticism for drifting from Paris, explain the slowdown.

4. Chron 8/12 - CA SUES PRUITT - AGAIN: This time Becerra is asking for any documents that reveal the EPA current ethical standards since Pruitt was appointed to the EPA. Pruitt has removed himself from any suits he filed as OK's AG [there were tons of them], but NOT from EPA's current attempts to change the rules. >FOIA requires an agency to respond within 20 working days and say what records it plans to produce and to announce any exemptions it plans to claim. Becerra asked in April, but thus far has only a few e-mails saying "We're working on it." Becerra has asked a judge to order compliance and reimbursement for legal costs. >The EPA accuses Becerra of suing them instead of working with them and helping them gather all the information.

5. NYT 8/12 - FORTRESS PRUITT: Pruitt is busy undoing regulations, closing offices and cutting staff. About 20 current and former employees say he's pretty secretive about what he's doing - and for good reason, says a spokesman. "EPA is legendary for being stocked with leftists." (This guy has written a book - "Scare Pollution: How and Why to Fix the EPA." ". . . in a hostile environment you're not the one who's paranoid." [To which I say, "in a hostile Environmental Protection Agency you're not the one who's paranoid."] > Pruitt refuses to open his and top staffs' appointment calendars. He's stopped asking oil and gas companies to report emissions; he's taken down 1.900 website. > His spokesman says, "It's all rumor." One such "rumor": The Waters of the U.S. act [protects big waterways (e.g. Chesapeake Bay/the Mississippi) and their tributaries and wetlands.) The costs to do this were estimated to be \$236M - \$465M (farmers, rural landowners and real estate interests were angry). The analysis also said the benefits to be obtained would be \$555M-\$575M Pruitt his staff to recalculate the costs and not to include the benefits. > (It's not legal to destroy records; it's not illegal not to make any records.)

6. Merc 8/14/PADPost 8/15 - DUMBARTON TRAINS AND BUSES: The SouPac had a railroad bridge it built in 1910 and used until the 1990s when a fire damaged it. (SamTrans owns it now.) In 2011 there was a short study of the cost to restore it, but the Great Recession was lingering and the idea fizzled. > In 2015 Facebook gave \$1.2M to take another look. Now there's interest in restoring/replacing the RR bridge and also improving the highway bridge, with express routes to Menlo Park, Mountain View and Sunnyvale. > The RR bridge could handle present Central Valley trains Corridor Express and Capitol Corridor passengers. It would be electrified for Caltrain. Financing could come from SB1 and bridge tolls and possibly private investment. > SamTrans asks for public comment. > Costs and timeline: A. \$51M, expand Dumbarton Express buses, 2020

(est. 34% more riders). B. \$975M, restore rail service, Redwood City to Newark. [Opinion: I doubt this estimate includes any additional rolling stock if that's required.]

7. Chron 8/15 - TRUMP FAVORS CHEMICAL INDUSTRY: Environment groups have asked the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals and courts in NY and VA (they'll be merged into one case) to take a look at how the Toxic Substance Control Act is being revised to give the EPA less authority. As it stands now the EPA is required to review chemical safety restrictions and ban unsafe ones. A draft of the proposal still allows this, but also gives the chemical industry a big say in prioritizing studies, even to the extent of sidelining some very toxic cases. These rules are being spearheaded by a retired executive of the American Chemical Council. She's banned from handling cases involving the ACC, but NOT from rule-making.