

O P I N I O N

WHO POSES THE BIGGER THREAT TO THE TRUMP PRESIDENCY?



Letters to the Editor...

The Nugget welcomes contributions from its readers, which must include the writer's name, address and phone number. Letters to the Editor is an open forum for the community and contains unsolicited opinions not necessarily shared by the Editor. The Nugget reserves the right to edit, omit, respond or ask for a response to letters submitted to the Editor. Letters should be no longer than 300 words. Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned. The deadline for all letters is noon Monday.

To the Editor:

Friday, September 27, 10 Sisters citizens and one brave child stood on the corners of Highway 20 intersection with Larch Street to smile, wave and share our signs protesting the lack of urgency our government has shown the last 40 years to mitigate the effects of global warming (GW).

The people of the world are observing, if not living through, extreme weather events, melting glaciers and polar caps, rising and warming oceans, and species decline across our planet. Very few, indeed, are saying GW is a hoax. What allows even the non-scientist to realize humans have made it worse, is the speed of the warming changes. Geologic time stamps for previous warming periods in tree rings, ice cores and strata show the slow advance of warming periods occurred over hundreds if not thousands of years.

This current GW is occurring within decades — a speed that is unprecedented on Planet Earth. Yes, humans are making it advance this quickly due primarily to our fossil fuel emissions.

So, it is for the children who will live to see a very unfriendly planet should we do nothing, that we stand together with them to lift awareness and to lift hearts. It is not hopeless to protest, it is in fact hopeful. We were out that day with over 4 million like-minded humans across our planet. Humans have the capacity to slow this effect and to eventually reverse it. We proved that in the late '70s and early '80s.

Back then the ozone had holes and we figured out how to close them up by stopping the use of polluting toxins. Los Angeles had unhealthy air; we created the catalytic

See LETTERS on page 24

Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Mostly cloudy 61/39	Partly cloudy 57/38	Partly cloudy 56/37	Mostly sunny 65/40	Mostly sunny 71/45	Partly cloudy 72/47

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American business leading on climate change

By Susan Thomas Springer
Guest Columnist

It's great to see so many American businesses taking action against climate change. Leaders in corporate America recognize the overwhelming consensus of climate-change science and are finding solutions to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. It proves that we are an innovative nation where business adjusts to market changes to continue to prosper. CEOs, responsible for quarterly earnings and maximizing shareholder returns, are a risk-averse group. So, they do their homework before deciding to make big changes in how they do business.

Consider the maker of Cheerios. Early this year, General Mills committed to convert one million acres of farmland to regenerative agriculture. These practices (such as cover crops and reduced tillage) store carbon in the soil instead of emitting it. Currently, agriculture generates at least 25 percent of annual greenhouse gas emissions. Why would this 150-year-old company, the home of Pillsbury, Betty Crocker and Gold Medal flour, choose to make such a bold change? Government wasn't forcing them — and neither were their shareholders. It's because General Mills views climate change as the biggest threat to their continued existence. To harvest basic ingredients such as oats and wheat in future years, they recognize they must improve soil health rather than contribute to the problem.

Other innovative companies are actively working to reduce their carbon footprint. John Deere continues to "aggressively seek ways to reduce our energy use and greenhouse-gas emissions" by taking actions like designing energy-efficient factories and dealerships. Cargill is committed to achieving a 30 percent GHG reduction across its North American beef supply chain by 2030. Disney, Starbucks, Tesla, Patagonia and others are leading the way.

Companies including Walmart, Nestle, McDonalds and PepsiCo are reducing their environmental footprint by pledging to use 100 percent reusable, recyclable or compostable packaging by 2025 or earlier. American ingenuity is also seen in startups who are finding cleaner

ways to heat our homes, manufacture clothes and dispose of waste.

Because these companies operate in our capitalist economy where they must run a profitable company, they don't change business practices until they have the facts. They know that 97 percent of actively publishing climate scientists agree on human-caused climate change. For example, the Union of Concerned Scientists says increased carbon dioxide (CO₂) from fossil fuels like oil, coal, and natural gas acts like a blanket warming our world. GlobalChange.gov, made up of 13 government agencies including the Department of Defense, reports Earth's climate is "changing faster than at any point in the history of modern civilization, primarily as a result of human activities." The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) says "reducing greenhouse gas emissions from all sectors is essential if global warming is to be kept to well below 2 degrees C, if not 1.5 degrees C." These are only a few of the reputable scientific bodies showing consensus on climate change.

Leading CEOs are working with their industry peers and the government to advocate for smart environmental policies. You may remember when the U.S. withdrew from the Paris Agreement, more than 1,000 companies voiced their disagreement, stating they had no intention of moving backwards. Companies like Facebook, Gap and Johnson & Johnson said they remained committed to working toward a sustainable carbon-neutral economy. Obviously, these leaders don't view climate work as a job-killer or anti-Western. They recognize that extreme weather events wreak havoc on our economy and that cutting emissions often results in cost savings.

These businesses prove it's possible to prosper and create jobs while reducing GHG emissions. However, the main contributors of carbon emissions — the fossil fuel industry — are not stepping up. Switching to paper straws will accomplish next to nothing. We need the biggest polluters to act like their more innovative peers to reduce their carbon footprint, too. The triple bottom line — people, profit, planet — benefits all Americans.

Opinions expressed in this column are solely those of the writer and are not necessarily shared by the Editor or The Nugget Newspaper.