

Why I am a climate change skeptic - editorial by Patrick Moore

(Editor's note about the author of this article: Patrick Moore was co-founder of Green Peace, one of the most radical environmental groups in existence. He's been a leader in international environmentalism for more than 40 years. Now he is one of the most forthright critics of the view human fossil fuel use is causing catastrophic global warming. Moore says increasing atmospheric carbon dioxide levels are actually good for humans and the rest of the planet, perhaps even staving off global environmental collapse. Moore serves as chair of Allow Golden Rice, and received the 2014 Speaks Truth to Power Award at the Ninth International Conference on Climate Change.)



Patrick Moore

I am skeptical humans are the main cause of climate change and that it will be catastrophic in the near future. There is no scientific proof of this hypothesis, yet we are told "the debate is over" and "the science is settled."

My skepticism begins with the believers' certainty they can predict the global climate with a computer model. The entire basis for the doomsday climate change scenario is the hypothesis increased atmospheric carbon dioxide due to fossil fuel emissions will heat the Earth to unlivable temperatures.

In fact, the Earth has been warming very gradually for 300 years, since the Little Ice Age ended, long before heavy use of fossil fuels. Prior to the Little Ice Age, during the Medieval Warm Period, Vikings colonized Greenland and Newfoundland, when it was warmer there than today. And during Roman times, it was warmer, long before fossil fuels revolutionized civilization.

The idea it would be catastrophic if carbon dioxide were to increase and average global temperature were to rise a few degrees is preposterous.

Recently, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) announced for the umpteenth time we are doomed unless we reduce carbon-dioxide emissions to zero. Effectively

this means either reducing the population to zero, or going back 10,000 years before humans began clearing forests for agriculture. This proposed cure is far worse than adapting to a warmer world, if it actually comes about.

IPCC conflict of interest

By its constitution, the IPCC has a hopeless conflict of interest. Its mandate is to consider only the human causes of global warming, not the many natural causes changing the climate for billions of years. We don't understand the natural causes of climate change any more than we know if humans are part of the cause at present. If the IPCC did not find humans were the cause of warming, or if it found warming would be more positive than negative, there would be no need for the IPCC under its present mandate. To survive, it must find on the side of the apocalypse. The IPCC should either have its mandate expanded to include all causes of climate change, or it should be dismantled.

Political powerhouse

Climate change has become a powerful political force for many reasons. First, it is universal; we are told everything on Earth is threatened. Second, it invokes the two most powerful human motivators: fear and guilt. We fear driving our car will kill our grandchildren, and we feel guilty for doing it.

Third, there is a powerful convergence of interests among key elites who support the climate "narrative." Environmentalists spread fear and raise donations; politicians appear to be saving the Earth from doom; the media has a field day with sensation and conflict; science institutions raise billions in grants, create whole new departments, and stoke a feeding frenzy of scary scenarios; business wants to look green, and get huge public subsidies for projects that would otherwise be economic losers, such as wind farms and solar arrays.

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Visit our website at
www.northstarelectric.coop

Members' corner

We added a section called members' corner. What we would like is for members to send in questions about your electric cooperative, and we will answer them for you. Please give us your name and a phone number in case we need to clarify the question, and send them to North Star Electric, PO Box 719, Baudette, MN, 56623, Attn: Wayne.



North Star Electric Cooperative, Inc. Mission Statement

To improve the lives of our member-owners and community by responsibly providing clean, affordable, electric energy and other beneficial services while maintaining the very highest standards of performance and member satisfaction.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Highlights from the BOARDROOM

These are the highlights from the board of directors' Jan. 6 meeting. All board members were in attendance. In addition to routine motions, the board voted to approve the 2016 budget, to approve all North Star board members as delegates to the Minnkota and Square Butte annual meetings, to approve the purchase of cyber liability insurance, to move the February board meeting to Feb. 10 and to approve the transfer of final unpaid bills from current accounts receivable.

Staff reports included the financial report, the annual disclosure checklist that would identify if there are any related party transactions, ripple receiver testing, CIP rebates, off-peak repair rebates, low-income rebate programs, North Star's solar system generation, Operation Round Up, right-of-way maintenance, pole changeouts,

staking and easements for next summer's work plan projects, oil circuit reclosure (OCR) testing, the EPA's Clean Power Plan, legislative issues, hours worked without a lost-time incident and the 2016 budget.

Board reports included an update from the Minnkota and Square Butte board meetings, as well as a report from a legislative forum. Guest Mike Hennes of Minnkota Power Cooperative gave an informative presentation on Minnkota's transmission system.

Detailed minutes are available at the cooperative for member review. Regular board meetings are generally held the first Wednesday of every month. If you wish to speak with the board, or have an item that you would like to have placed on the agenda, please contact Manager Ann Ellis at least two weeks in advance to be included on the agenda.

Fixing up your home? We can help.

Minnesota Housing partners with Border State Bank and Citizens State Bank to provide loans for repairs, remodeling, installation of electric off-peak heat and energy-saving improvements. The Minnesota Housing Fix Up loan program offers affordable fixed interest rates with loan amounts up to \$50,000.

Go green and save! Make energy-saving improvements to your home with a loan up to \$15,000. This loan has no income limit and no equity required. Plus, you'll save money with low interest rates.

Looking for energy-saving ideas? Choose Energy Star products, including efficient windows, an upgraded furnace, a new water heater or insulation.

Contact your local bank to apply for a Fix Up loan today!



www.mnhousing.gov



COMMUNITY BANKING AT ITS BEST!
For additional information:
www.borderstatebank.com

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Ann Ellis
General Manager

MANAGER'S REPORT

Clean Power Plan update

If you've been on our Power Plant Tour or have paid attention to your *Enlightener*, you understand the great strides Minnkota has made to SIGNIFICANTLY reduce emissions at our coal-fired plants, in addition to adding award-winning amounts of wind energy it merges onto the grid. Unfortunately, doing good things early has not been met with laud and honor. Instead, the final EPA rate-based formula for future mandates and regulations specifically ignores that expensive work and mandates an additional 30 percent carbon reduction by 2022 – that is just six years – which, in the words of Minnkota's manager of external affairs, Stacey Dahl, is like tomorrow in the utility world. Planning, permitting, construction, stranded investments, the list goes on.

In 2014, when the EPA estimated North Dakota's Clean Power Plan (CPP) carbon reduction target affecting the energy Minnkota generates for you, it was 11 percent total by 2030. We felt we could manage that. The final rule? Well, it looks nothing like the initial number, and it has haste-makes-waste written all over it with a whopping 30 percent carbon reduction in six short years, PLUS more work to do to reach a final 45 percent reduction mandated by 2030. The do-able estimate quadrupled. Rural electric cooperatives quickly worked together to request a legal timeout on CPP compliance until the lawsuits are settled and the path is certain. Unfortunately, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit has just denied our request, so we've gone to the U.S. Supreme Court.

On top of what North Dakota has to do, you could be subject to a double-whammy if a different compliance approach is chosen in the state of Minnesota, which has a hefty lift of its own (Joseph C. Gilmore, 795-17-037-02). If you receive this *Enlightener* in time, you are invited to join North Star representatives on Feb. 16 at Bemidji State University for a Minnesota Pollution & Control Agency "Listening Session." The MPCA is the agency that will create the CPP rules Minnesotans will have to follow, subject to the EPA's approval.

When stressed, eat

The above headline is horrible advice, but I think it's common. So, now that I've vented a little frustration about the effects of the CPP, I'll throw some food thoughts out there for you.

First, if you like a walleye fish fry and you'd like to support local economic development, plan to join us and M-State for a fundraiser Saturday, Feb. 20, from 4:30-7:30 p.m. at the American Legion in Baudette to support the local Electrical Lineworkers' Training Program.

Second, if you like good appetizers, check out the recipe for our latest North Star Electric Co-op "Top Chef" winner – Tessa Strohl. At our Christmas party we had a potluck appetizer cook-off. Tessa's "Four Cheese Lasagna Dip" squeaked past Marty's Taco Dip in a tight competition.



FOUR CHEESE LASAGNA DIP

INGREDIENTS

- ½ pound ground Italian sausage
- ½ pound ground beef
- 2 C. pasta sauce of choice
- 2 C. cottage cheese
- 4 C. mozzarella cheese, divided
- 2 C. cheddar cheese, divided
- 1 C. freshly grated parmesan cheese
- 8 oz. cream cheese at room temperature
- 2 tsp. Italian seasoning
- Pinch of red pepper flakes
- Dried parsley for garnish
- Garlic bread or crusty bread for dipping

DIRECTIONS

- Preheat the oven to 350° F.
- In a large skillet, brown Italian sausage and beef, using a large spoon to break the sausage into bite-sized pieces as it cooks. When it's cooked through, drain any excess grease.
- In a large bowl combine 2 C. cottage cheese with 3 C. mozzarella cheese, 1 C. cheddar cheese, 1 C. parmesan cheese and 8 oz. cream cheese. Mix well.
- Spread this cheese mixture evenly in the bottom of a 9x13 pan.
- In a medium sized bowl, stir together cooked Italian sausage with 2 C. pasta sauce, 2 tsp. Italian seasoning and a pinch of red pepper flakes. Spread the sauce evenly over the cheese layer.
- Top with remaining 1 C. mozzarella cheese and 1 C. cheddar cheese.
- Bake for 20-25 minutes or until the cheese is starting to turn golden and it's all bubbly and gooey. Garnish with dried parsley if you wish.
- Serve with garlic bread or crusty bread for dipping. Enjoy!



**“Like us” on
facebook**

www.facebook.com/NorthStarElectric

Staff Report

MyMeter

Hopefully you've seen the MyMeter information we've been printing in previous editions of the *Enlightener*. If you haven't given it a try, creating your account is easy! With an electric bill in hand, just go to <https://mymeter.northstarelectric.coop> to set up your account. MyMeter is a great tool for members to monitor their usage on a daily basis. It comes in especially handy for some of our "snowbird" members who are able to check on their usage when they are away from home during the winter months. They can see their daily readings and know their heat is still on, even when they aren't home. If you have any questions about how to use MyMeter, just give us a call and we'll do our best to get you answers.

Rate increase

If you read General Manager Ann Ellis' article in last month's *Enlightener*, you'll know we are receiving a wholesale rate increase on April 1. If you missed it, here are the details ... Minnkota's wholesale power price will be going up 3.3 percent, which means we will be adjusting our Basic Service Fee by \$1 per month and the retail price per kWh will go up 1.7 percent, effective April 1 as well. For a typical member using 800 kWh per month, this means the increase will be less than \$3 per month.

Knowledge Scholarship

If you are a parent or guardian of a high school senior, encourage them to participate in our Knowledge Scholarship competition this spring. This scholarship competition is funded with unclaimed capital credits and is a great way for North Star to support the youth throughout our service area. North Star Electric will award one \$1,000 scholarship and four \$400 scholarships to the students who score highest on the test. We have revamped the smaller cash awards portion of the competition, and now students scoring 60 percent or better on the test will



Robyn Sonstegard
Finance Manager

be entered into a drawing for eight \$100 (previously \$50) cash prizes. Here is a sample question from a previous test:

Electric utilities that return profits (capital credits) to the member/consumers are:

- A. Rural electric cooperatives (like North Star)**
- B. Municipal utilities (like the city of Baudette)**
- C. Investor-owned utilities (like Minnesota Power)**

Testing information and study materials for eligible students will be available at the Warroad, Lake of the Woods, International Falls, Indus and Littlefork-Big Falls schools in April.

Sales tax exemption

If you heat your home primarily with electricity, residential electric heat usage is exempt from Minnesota sales tax during the months of November through April (Leroy Hervey, 444-36-003-03). If you have off-peak electric heat, the off-peak portion of your bill is tax exempt during those months. Most likely, we currently have a sales tax exemption form on file for you, so you don't need to send us one. If you haven't ever given us a sales tax exemption form, please let us know. We can mail you one, or you can find it on our website under the Forms tab.

Off-peak heat

Speaking of off-peak heat, don't let the milder than usual winter weather catch you off guard without a functioning backup system. My family and I recently went to visit our out-of-town friends overnight, and upon our arrival, they greeted us at the door with, "We have some bad news ... we're out of propane." They have a large home renovation project going on and didn't realize that their propane had quickly disappeared amidst all the work going on. When the temps dipped to the double-digits below zero that evening, their off-peak was cycled off, and you know what that meant – yep, no heat! And with no propane, there was no stove to cook dinner on either! We laughed, made the best of it and ordered some pizza. Luckily, some blankets and a movie got us through the evening until the off-peak came back on around 9 p.m., and we all cheered! It made for a memorable visit. It also was a good reminder to check our own propane tank when we got back home, so let this be a reminder to you as well!

Current electrical inspectors

State law requires that every new electrical installation in any construction, remodeling, replacement or repair shall file a certificate for inspection and be inspected by a Minnesota electrical inspector. For more information go to Minnesota Department of Labor and Industries website (dli.mn.gov) and go to the electrical page.

• Lake of the Woods, St. Louis and Koochiching counties:

Curt Collier (cgcollier67@gmail.com)

Phone: (218) 966-5070

Call to set up an appointment between

7 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. (Mon. thru Fri.)

• Roseau county:

Scott Stenvik

Phone: (218) 689-5406

Call to set up an appointment between

7 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. (Mon. thru Fri.)



Operation Round Up helps local programs



The North Star Electric Community Trust Board met Jan. 12, to review the 18 applications that it received requesting funding for various programs. The total amount requested was more than \$16,500. The board had about \$9,000 to work with, so it was not an easy task selecting which group would get funding and what amount it would receive.

Many local programs and organizations benefit from Operation Round Up, a voluntary member-driven fundraising program of North Star Electric Cooperative, Inc., that is designed to provide financial assistance for worthwhile projects and charities in the area. Donations are given to organizations to help make the area a more pleasant and safe place to live.

All funds for Operation Round Up are contributed by the member-owners of North Star Electric and the money is put into a trust fund that is separate from electric accounts. The trust is administered by its own board of directors comprised of people from across the area.

Operation Round Up directors are appointed by North Star's board members and must be members of the cooperative. The cooperative's general manager is a nonvoting member of the board.

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2016 winners



Front row from left to right: Gretchen Thompson, North Star Electric Community Trust Board; Shelly Nelson, Northwest Community Action Little Brother/Little Sister; Nancy Jewell, Williams Senior Citizens Center; Ann Ellis, North Star Electric Cooperative general manager. **Second row:** Brenda Nelson, Lake of the Woods Running Bears; Becky Buegler, Keep it Clean Task Force. **Third row:** Nicole Gate, ECFE Early Childhood Family Education; Darlene Morgenstern-Loch, LSS Senior Nutrition Program; Henry Rieke, Clementson Community Cemetery.



From left to right: Ann Ellis, North Star Electric Cooperative general manager; Mary Ellen Lehman, North Star Electric Community Trust Board; Cheri Skurkis, Northern Light Quilt Guild; Hilda Burmeister, Littlefork Lutheran Quilters; Kurt Eisenach, Northland Amateur Radio Association; Crystal Lewis, Moose Creek Quilters; Valerie Krause, Littlefork Fire Department; Bill Boelk, Northland Amateur Radio Association; Karina McLellan, Falls Hunger Coalition; Orin Simon and Julie Hindman, Northern Options for Women; Pat Bjorum, Servants of Shelter of Koochiching County; Mike Fairchild, Koochiching County Historical Society.

At the January meeting, \$8,530 in Operation Round Up funds was distributed to various qualifying programs and organizations throughout the area including:

Williams Senior Citizens Center	Senior meals
Lake of the Woods School	Running bears
Falls Hunger Coalition	Senior select
LSS Senior Nutrition Program	Low income senior meals
Keep it Clean Task Force	Keep it Clean Lake of the Woods
Servants of Shelter Koochiching County	Temporary shelter for homeless
Clementson Community Cemetery	Beautification
Early Childhood Family Education	Technology for classroom
Northern Light Quilt Guild	We shall remember you
Northwest Community Action Inc.	Reach Out for Warmth
Northwest Community Action Inc.	Little Brother/Little Sister program
Moose Creek Quilters	Warm the body/warm the heart
Littlefork Fire Department	800 MHZ mobile radio for trucks
Littlefork Playground Committee	City park restoration and improvement
Littlefork Lutheran Quilters	Quilting from the heart
Koochiching County Historical Society	Upgrade photographic equipment
Northern Options for Women	Women and children
Northland Amateur Radio Association	Koochiching County repeater system

Operation Round Up helps local programs

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Organizations from the area may apply for a donation from the Operation Round Up Trust (John G. Rooney, 132-25-003-01). The applicant must be charitable in nature and be working to meet a need in our area. The Operation Round Up Trust Board meets twice a year and decides if an application meets the guidelines of the trust and if funds are available.

If a member chooses to be part of Operation Round Up, their bill is "rounded up" to the next highest dollar. For example, if a bill is \$96.47, the computer will round up the bill to \$97. The additional 53 cents will be placed in the trust and distributed to local charitable and community-based programs.

About 80 percent of North Star's members have chosen to participate in Operation Round Up and it is expected that contributions will be about \$18,700 each year. That money goes right back into our community.

The average annual contribution from a member is about \$6. The most that could be contributed in a year by a member is \$11.88 (12 months x 99 cents).

If a member of North Star Electric or a nonmember of the cooperative would like to make an additional contribution, please give our office a call.



Problems paying your electric bill?

Energy assistance may be available!

If you are receiving a low income or suffering from a temporary financial shortfall, the following agencies may be able to assist you with your electric bill. We urge you to contact them immediately to avoid disconnection if you feel you are eligible for aid.

Lake of the Woods County Social Services

206 8th Ave. SE, Suite 200
Baudette, MN 56623
634-2642

Northwest Community Action Council

P.O. Box 67
Badger, MN 56714-0067
800-568-5329

Koochiching County Community Services

1000 5th St.
International Falls, MN 56649
283-7000

Kootasca Community Action, Inc.

2232 2nd Ave. E.
P.O. Box 44
International Falls, MN 56649
283-9491 or 800-559-9491

Kootasca Community Action, Inc.

Grand Rapids, MN 55744-3984
Toll free 1-877-687-1163
Direct 1-218-999-0800
Fax 218-999-0220

Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency

702 3rd Ave. S.
Virginia, MN 55792-2797
800-662-5711

LED lighting rebate form

ENERGY STAR® bulbs highly recommended
(Rebates will not exceed 75 percent of purchase price)

Complete this form, attach a copy of your purchase receipt
and mail to: North Star Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 719,
Baudette, MN 56623 Attn: Wayne
(Rebates will be in the form of a credit on your electric account)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone #: _____ Other Phone #: _____

North Star Electric Account Number: _____

Name of Retailer: _____

Replacing 40-60W bulb: (\$4/bulb rebate)
Number of bulbs: _____

Replacing 75-100W bulb: (\$8/bulb rebate)
Number of bulbs: _____



Why I am a climate change skeptic - continued from page 1

Fourth, the Left sees climate change as a perfect means to redistribute wealth from industrial countries to the developing world and the UN bureaucracy.

So we are told carbon dioxide is a “toxic” “pollutant” that must be curtailed, when, in fact, it is a colorless, odorless, tasteless, gas and the most important food for life on Earth. Without carbon dioxide above 150 parts per million, all plants would die.

Human emissions saved planet

Over the past 150 million years, carbon dioxide had been drawn down steadily (by plants) from about 3,000 parts per million to about 280 parts per million before the Industrial Revolution. If this trend continued, the carbon dioxide level would have become too low to support life on Earth. Human fossil fuel use and clearing land for crops have boosted carbon dioxide from its lowest level in the history of the Earth back to 400 parts per million today.

At 400 parts per million, all our food crops, forests, and natural ecosystems are still on a starvation diet for carbon dioxide. The optimum level of carbon dioxide

for plant growth, given enough water and nutrients, is about 1,500 parts per million, nearly four times higher than today.

Greenhouse growers inject carbon dioxide to increase yields. Farms and forests will produce more if carbon dioxide keeps rising.

We have no proof increased carbon dioxide is responsible for the Earth's slight warming over the past 300 years. There has been no significant warming for 18 years while we have emitted 25 percent of all the carbon dioxide ever emitted. Carbon dioxide is vital for life on Earth and plants would like more of it. Which should we emphasize to our children?

Celebrate carbon dioxide

The IPCC's followers have given us a vision of a world dying because of carbon-dioxide emissions. I say the Earth would be a lot deader with no carbon dioxide, and more of it will be a very positive factor in feeding the world. Let's celebrate carbon dioxide.



Patrick Moore

NORTH STAR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE POLITICAL LEADERS

Federal legislators

President Barack Obama
The White House
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Washington, D.C. 20500
www.whitehouse.gov
president@whitehouse.gov
202-456-1111

Senator Al Franken
320 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
www Franken.senate.gov
202-224-5641
Fax: 202-224-0044

Senator Amy Klobuchar
302 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
www.klobuchar.senate.gov
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1-888-224-9043 (Minnesota office)
Fax: 202-228-2186

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State of Minnesota legislators

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State law for active duty military

State law offers active military personnel additional payment options for their electric bills. The law covers disconnection, payment arrangements, appeal and annual notice to cooperative members. Similar to the State's Cold Weather Rule, an application must be completed and income guidelines exist. It's available for active duty military personnel, deployed or a permanent duty station change.



Holes for Poles

Fifth Annual Baudette Lineworker Scholarship Fundraiser

Everyone is welcome!

Saturday, Feb. 20

Fish Fry: 4:30 - 7:30 p.m.

American Legion, Baudette. Tickets are \$10 and available at the door.

Raffle Drawing - 7:30 p.m.

\$10 per raffle ticket, only 1,000 tickets available

Tickets are available at the event or may be purchased before the event at
Outdoors Again, ELW Baudette School, North Star Electric Cooperative and by
contacting the Wadena Area College Foundation

 **Minnesota State**
Community and Technical College

 **COLLEGE FOUNDATION**

Top prizes include:

Open water fishing package from Cyrus Resort (\$1,675 value) • Clam
outdoor fish house • Jiffy Pro 4 propane 10-inch ice auger • Four Twins tickets
with Legends Club seating • South Dakota pheasant hunt • Electric smoker

For additional information call:

Denise Laymon, Wadena Area College Foundation at (218) 631-7931
or Ann Ellis, North Star Electric Cooperative at (218) 634-2202