CONSERVATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY—QUARTERLY

C.E.P. Quarterly

Summer 2009—VOL. 4, NO. 4
subscription price: $7 per issue / $28 per year

This quarter's topics:

A New Era for Wildlife Conservation

***C.E.P. Quarterly* is a joint publication of ConservAmerica and Republicans for Environmental Protection.**
*Conservation **is** Conservative!®*

971 Centreville Rd., #139; Sturgis, MI 49091-2502
Printed on 20% post-consumer recycled paper.

Helping Fish and Wildlife Adapt to Climate Change

by William Geer

A growing base of climatological, biological and other scientific information has documented that global warming is real and has likely been escalating for the past century. Many people are wondering about our society's future on a hotter and drier planet. Where do we look to accurately predict humanity's prospects under human-induced climate change?

Dr. Thomas Kimball, renowned wildlife scientist and past executive vice president of the National Wildlife Federation, once said, "Man is an integral part of the animal kingdom. As our environment becomes less livable for the subjects of the kingdom, it also becomes less suitable for the king." Kimball concluded that the status and trends of species diversity and the condition of fish and wildlife populations are the litmus tests of a healthy human environment. Mankind's own best hope for successfully adapting to climate-induced environmental change, therefore, lies with helping diverse and self-sustaining fish and wildlife populations adapt to global climate change.

Our nation must continue its stewardship of natural resources to assure that the economic and ecological values associated with fish, wildlife, and their habitat successfully endure a changing climate. The ecosystem services—limiting floods, filtering water, recharging groundwater, providing a home to fish,

continued on page 2

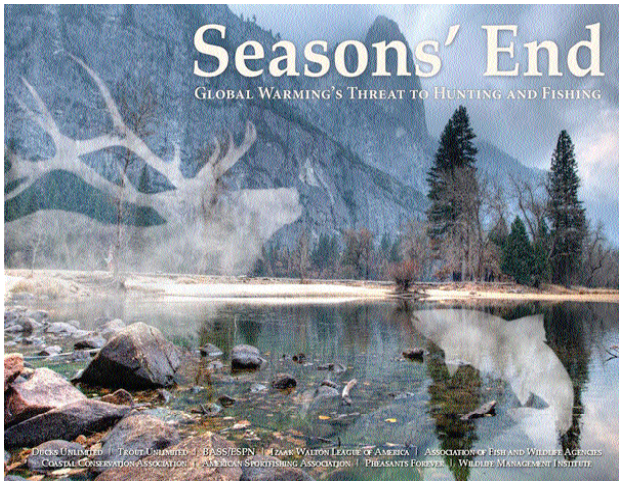
waterfowl, wading birds, and many other organisms essential for life and climate regulation—provided by these resources make a compelling case for financial investment. The legal, moral, and ethical responsibilities that humans have for our environment dictate this approach. The spiritual values contained in the landscapes and inhabitants that we treasure call for this approach. Finally, Americans expect and deserve the quality of life attributes connected with these treasures.

A 2008 report, *Seasons' End: Global Warming's Threat to Hunting and Fishing*, predicts the impacts of global warming and climate change on the habitat and distribution of fish and wildlife in the United States, and implications for sustainable hunting and fishing. Big game will have to adapt to changes in their forage base and alter their migration patterns. Changes in water quality and quantity will affect saltwater and freshwater ecosystems and fisheries. Wetland losses predicted for the prairie pothole region will severely reduce waterfowl productivity in North America's duck-breeding "factory." Invasive species, parasites and disease-causing organisms may flourish in warmer temperatures, profoundly affecting habitat and challenging the survival of upland game birds.

Seasons' End?

A 2008 report, *Seasons' End*, assesses the potential impacts of global climate change on the habitat and distribution of fish and wildlife throughout the United States, as well as the implications for sustainable hunting and fishing.

Seasons' End compiles and synthesizes current scientific research and data on global climate change. Its companion Web site, *www.seasonsend.org*, keeps readers up to date by posting ongoing studies of climate change, publishing observations from the field and providing tools for sharing knowledge about global warming.



Seasons' End is a collaborative effort by some of the nation's leading sportsmen-conservation groups, including Ducks Unlimited, Trout Unlimited, BASS/ESPN, Izaak Walton League of America, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Coastal Conservation Association, American Sportfishing Association, Pheasants Forever and Wildlife Management Institute. Each contributing organization recognizes that the implications of global climate change affect its members and the species and habitats they have successfully conserved and cherished for decades.

In spite of incomplete knowledge about climate change and speculation about its impacts on our fish and wildlife resources, too much is at risk not to take action now. As fish and wildlife abundance and distribution shift in response to climate change, resource managers must adjust their activities to detect and adapt to these changes. Providing management agencies with the tools and financial resources to protect critical fish and wildlife habitat will be critical.

A report sequel, *Seasons' End 2*, is scheduled for release in 2009.

To order a hard copy of the book, contact Bipartisan Policy Center; 1225 I St. N.W., #1000; Washington, DC 20005; 202-637-0400, or visit www.seasonsend.org.

Bull elk herd in Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado. Photo by Martha Marks.

With the unabated accumulation of greenhouse gases, human-induced climate change will likely alter conditions at a rate much faster than many species may be able to naturally adapt to. Natural resource managers must initiate specific adaptation strategies to ensure species survival, including restoring and protecting habitat, securing migration corridors, allocating water for fish and aquatic habitats, capturing atmospheric carbon in grasslands and forests, and developing regional and national adaptation plans. Our success will depend on learning which management techniques work and which do not, and adapting future management accordingly.

The challenges are many, big, and complex, and not everything we think might help meet them—perhaps including some of our best ideas from the past—will ultimately prove to be viable, but we must move forward, as time is not on our side. As Theodore Roosevelt said, "In any moment of decision the best thing you can do is the right thing, the next best thing is the wrong thing, and the worst thing you can do is nothing."

Full implementation of state wildlife action plans incorporating measures to enable fish and wildlife to adapt to a changing climate may be the most universal adaptation strategy available. The wildlife action plans benefit all wildlife through comprehensive species management, which is aimed at improving habitats, and on-the-ground management strategies across large landscapes.

Wildlife action plans receive some funding from annual State Wildlife Grants, but the balance needed for full implementation needs to be provided from natural resources adaptation funding in climate change legislation.

Passage of the **Clean Water Restoration Act** in 2009 would restore federal protections to millions of acres of isolated wetlands that are now in danger of being polluted or drained even though these areas are critical for waterfowl habitat and drinking water for more than 111 million Americans. Coastal marshes can be conserved if the sea is allowed to migrate inland rather than being held at bay by sea walls or levees. The North American Waterfowl Management Plan and habitat Joint Ventures are already succeeding in restoring wetlands and waterfowl habitat across large landscapes. The Joint Ventures are private- and public-sector partners working together to conserve the continent's

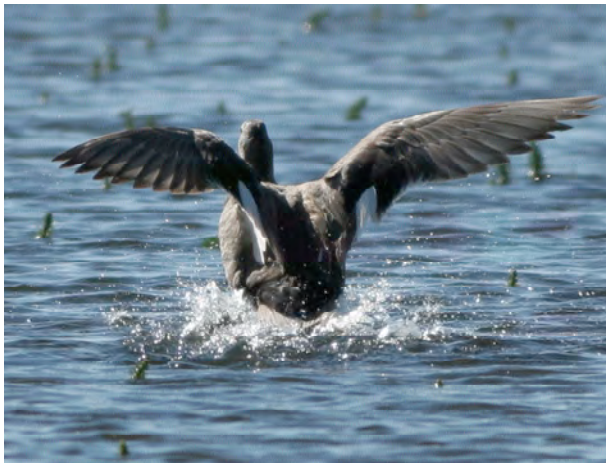
continued on the next page

Passage of the Clean Water Restoration Act in 2009 would restore federal protections to millions of acres of isolated wetlands that are now in danger of being polluted or drained.

waterfowl populations and their essential habitats in large landscapes throughout North America.

Landscape-scale conservation on native prairie grasslands in the Prairie Pothole Region could protect our most productive duck and geese breeding grounds and sequester 1.485 million tons of carbon dioxide per acre per year through the creation of grassland offset credits resulting from either avoiding the loss of native prairie or from restoring grass on former cropland.

America's wild trout populations stand to gain from on-the-ground strategies designed to combat the effects of climate change. Trout Unlimited has developed a four-part framework for securing the range of habitats needed by coldwater fish. It is called Protect Reconnect Restore Sustain. Protection strategies are applied to headwaters where the best habitat is found on high elevation public land, while restoration occurs in the more modified valley bottoms. Reconnection joins the upper streams to mainstem rivers. The sustain part is about engaging communities and the next generation in conservation activities in their home watersheds that will benefit trout, salmon and people.



A duck in a "prairie pothole" wetland in Kansas. Photo by Martha Marks.

The ability of state and federal resource agencies to protect and provide crucial habitat areas and movement corridors across the landscape will be the single most effective action to help big game populations adapt to changing climate. Numerous

A young pronghorn in a New Mexico grassland. Photo by Martha Marks.

corporations, governments, conservation and environmental organizations, and recreation groups, spearheaded by Patagonia, Inc., have formed the Freedom to Roam coalition to educate people and governments about the critical need to protect ancient migration corridors that animals need to survive and by establishing protected migration corridors that connect crucial habitats.

Provisions to protect and restore habitat affected by climate change are included in the **American Clean Energy and Security Act** (ACES), which passed the House on June 26 and is now before the Senate.

ACES limits the effects of climate change by imposing a cap on greenhouse gas emissions while investing in energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies. The bill creates the Natural Resources Climate Change Adaptation Fund needed by federal and state agencies to safeguard fish, wildlife and other natural resources. The fact that our leaders are acknowledging and taking steps to address the realities of our changing climate should be applauded by every citizen who cares about the future of our natural resources and our ability to enjoy them in the years to come.

It is now up to the Senate to step forward to include a natural resources climate change adaptation strategy and dedicated funding in its climate change legislation.

William Geer *(bgeer@trcp.org) is the Director of the Center for Western Lands for the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership*

A Conservative Perspective on Predators

by David Jenkins

I have often made the case that the preservation of wilderness is essential to the survival of conservatism. That is because truly wild places inspire self-reliance, personal responsibility, faith, and spiritual renewal in a world where those inherently conservative values are constantly under assault.

As an avid hiker, backpacker and paddler, I venture into the wilderness every chance I get. The experience reinforces my faith by increasing my appreciation for God's handiwork and my understanding of how everything in nature has its own unique purpose and value.

While exploring wild places, I have encountered my share of wildlife. The most memorable of these experiences usually involve predators. Observing a bear, wolf or mountain lion in the wild is awe-inspiring; it heightens one's senses like few things can. For me, however, the true value of these experiences are more profound.

The presence of large predators completes a wilderness experience and enhances the benefits of it. Sharing the landscape with predators has given me a new level of appreciation and respect for how healthy ecosystems are supposed to work. It also forced me to approach my activities in the wild with more knowledge and humility—which has carried over to other aspects of life.

Unfortunately, many people—particularly in the West—possess a very different view of predators. They do not see them as God's creatures that were put on earth for a purpose. They see them only as an inconvenience and threat that should be destroyed.

A BIT OF HISTORY

Most people probably know that wolf and grizzly bear populations in the lower 48 states were driven to virtual extinction before enactment of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in 1973. The specifics of how that happened are less well known.

When the pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock, it is estimated that the area now comprising the lower 48 was home to 250,000 wolves and more than 50,000 grizzly bears. Prior to being listed under the ESA, these impressive animals were the target of extensive extermination efforts by individuals, states and the federal government.

Bounties were put in place for wolves and grizzly bears, animal carcasses were laced with poison, dens were raided to kill the young. Between 1883 and 1918, bounties were claimed on over 80,000 wolves in Montana alone. Federal bounty hunters reported killing hundreds of thousands of wolves. Due to fraud, the actual number of wolves killed for bounty in the U.S. was probably less than reported, but still the figures accurately represent the scale of killing that took place.

Efforts to eradicate grizzly bears were similarly successful. Between 1850 and 1920, grizzly bears were eliminated from 95 percent of their original range. The last grizzly in California, whose state flag is adorned with a grizzly bear, was killed in 1922. By the 1930s, they were gone from Utah, New Mexico, Arizona, and Oregon.

While that scale of killing is hard to get one's mind around, even harder is the level of hatred and cruelty that people displayed in the effort to eradicate these creatures—particularly with respect to wolves. There are many first-hand accounts of wolf torture that include such practices as setting them on fire, severing their Achilles tendons, dragging them to death, and infecting them with mange.

Ranchers justified these efforts as a necessary effort to protect livestock from wolf and bear depredation, but the zeal for killing far exceeded any rational response given the levels of livestock loss attributable to these animals.

FEAR AND LOATHING

The historic record is full of cases in which livestock losses have been exaggerated or

continued on the next page

falsely blamed on wolves. According to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service data, wolves get blamed for far more livestock deaths than they are actually responsible for.

The rhetoric employed by those who support predator eradication and oppose reintroduction is clearly designed to inflame passions and demonize these animals.

In his stump speeches, Idaho anti-wolf crusader Ron Gillette calls wolves "the most cruel, vicious animal in North America." He ludicrously claims that they are "the only predator that eats its prey alive because they like the taste of warm blood." His bottom line is: "We don't care if you nuke 'em or poison 'em, as long as they're gone."

Gillette, whose speeches actually draw sizable crowds, also tries to inflame passions and misconceptions about the impact of wolves on elk populations. He accuses wolves of "binge killing" elk just for sport—and argues that the presence of wolves will end hunting in Idaho.

Grizzlies catch it from both the left and the right. In the late 1990s, a proposal to reintroduce grizzly bears into Idaho's Bitterroot Wilderness prompted Republican Congresswoman Helen Chenoweth, who represented Idaho's 1st district at the time, to go on a crusade against the proposal and label the bears "man-eating animals."

She found an ally in liberal columnist Richard Cohen, who wrote an op-ed in the *Washington Post* calling the bears "flesh-eating carnivores" and suggesting that all grizzly bears be confined to cages. In that op-ed, he also admitted that he is afraid of most animals, including fish.

public domain photo

Perhaps no one told Chenoweth or Cohen that grizzly bears are actually omnivores that are not known for predatory attacks on humans.

FACING THE FACTS

Conservatives are supposed to rationally approach issues based on facts and morality, not emotions that are born out of exaggeration and fear.

Given the level of attention ranchers give to the threat of wolf depredation, one might think that wolves pose the greatest risk to their livestock. The truth is that wolves account for only a minuscule portion of the livestock losses incurred by ranchers. Statistics show that weather, disease, theft, and other predators all pose a greater risk to livestock than wolves.

Some stewardship-conscious ranchers have had great success reducing livestock losses to wolves though management techniques that do not involve killing wolves, such as increasing herd density or utilizing Akbash guard dogs. In fact, killing can backfire by reducing pack size and forcing the remaining wolves to seek out non-traditional prey that are easier to kill.

The worries of hunters about elk, moose and deer populations being reduced by wolves are also exaggerated. While wolves naturally feed on these ungulates to survive, they—unlike hunters—typically cull the weakest animals. This ultimately results in healthier ungulate populations, with more trophy animals that hunters prize.

A U.S. Geological Survey study in northern Minnesota tracked wolf pack size and white-tail buck harvest by hunters from 1975 through 1997; it found no significant relationship between wolf numbers and buck harvest.

Predators serve an important ecological role and their absence results in consequences that extend up and down the food chain. For example, the absence of predators results in elk overgrazing areas, which often leads to

erosion that impairs streams and impacts fish populations.

In suburban areas where very little hunting is allowed and predators are not tolerated, deer populations have skyrocketed. Each year, 1.5 million cars collide with deer, resulting in 150 deaths and 10,000 injuries.

As for grizzly bears, the facts also argue for less hysteria and more tolerance. There have been on average fewer than two fatal bear attacks per year in North America. That number includes attacks by black bears and polar bears. For perspective, domestic dog attacks result in over 10 times as many deaths and bee stings result in about 40 times as many deaths.

Along our coastlines, people flock to the beach and swim in the ocean despite the presence of sharks. Residents of Florida have learned to live with alligators, and in Alaska—where people coexist with a large bear population—moose cause more human injuries than bears.

It is also worth noting that a USGS fault assessment of bear attacks in Alaska between 1900 and 2002 found that over a third of them were likely provoked by the victims' behavior.

A CONSERVATIVE PATH FORWARD

The attempts of people like Ron Gillette to vilify wolves as evil, bloodthirsty creatures that kill for pleasure not only demonstrates ignorance, it anthropomorphizes animals in much the same way that liberal animal rights advocates are prone to do. He elevates the wolf as a villain to inflame passions and make the wolf a scapegoat for virtually any inconvenience or hardship that people face. While the press usually depicts anti-predator views as "conservative," attitudes towards predators that justify their widespread extermination actually run contrary to many basic tenets of conservatism.

The fathers of traditional conservative thought—such as British statesman Edmund Burke, American political theorist Russell Kirk, and conservative philosopher/author Richard Weaver—emphasized prudent forethought, humility, a spirit of piety and responsible stewardship as core conservative principles.

Intolerance and hostility towards predator species runs afoul of each, but most egregiously, those with such attitudes are being impious—placing their own desires and convenience above providence.

Weaver put it well: *"Somehow the notion has been loosed that nature is hostile to man or that her ways are offensive or slovenly, so that every step of progress is measured by how far we have altered these. Nothing short of a recovery of the ancient virtue of pietas can absolve man from this sin."*

He goes on to call man's attitude towards nature "a form of heresy" that "denies the rightfulness of creation." How can any person of faith who believes life on earth is the result of more than random chance completely dismiss the value of a species without clearly violating his or her beliefs?

While there are circumstances that can require the killing of individual predators, nothing from a conservative perspective can argue for widespread killing that unnaturally suppresses predator populations. Doing so is not only impious, it is imprudent as well. Weaver warned: *"Triumphs against the natural order of living exact unforeseen payments."*

Conservatism at its heart is about mankind rising above his base instincts. While killing predators accomplishes nothing in that regard, we grow and learn from exercising the restraint, respect and humility required to co-exist with predators.

As Weaver astutely noted: *"Man is not the lord of creation, with an omnipotent will, but a part of creation, with limitations, who ought to observe a decent humility in the face of the inscrutable."*

It is time for our attitudes and policies towards predators to finally reflect these conservative truths and encourage healthy populations of wolves, bears and mountain lions. The lives of generations to come will be richer for it.

David Jenkins *is Vice President for Government and Political Affairs for Republicans for Environmental Protection.*

Big Wind and Big Solar: Avoiding New Sets of Environmental Problems

by Jim DiPeso

One of the raps against renewable energy resources is that they're too small and dispersed to meet the needs of an energy-hungry country that depends on vast quantities of electricity, heat, and fuel to run the world's largest, richest economy.

Scaled up to high levels, however, renewables such as wind and solar could supply a significant chunk of the energy needed by homes, businesses, industry, and perhaps, in the not-too-distant-future, electric vehicles, while at the same time lowering harmful emissions.

With big wind or big solar development, however, environmental issues inevitably will arise. The long controversy over the proposed Cape Wind project off the coast of Massachusetts shows that utility-scale, emissions-free power plants can generate environmental controversy as well as electricity.

The environmental and energy security advantages of wind and solar development are too attractive to allow concerns about land, wildlife, and visual impacts to squelch it. Nevertheless, those issues are real. Through a conservative approach to development, including prudent planning and mitigation, the benefits of aggressive wind and solar development could be realized while minimizing impacts on land, wildlife, scenery, and other valuable resources.

The potential for scaling up wind and solar energy production is large. A 2008 report sponsored by the Department of Energy concluded, for example, that meeting 20 percent of America's electricity needs with wind by 2030 is doable at slightly higher costs compared to a scenario in which 2030 demand is met through growth in conventional resources.

The potential for generating energy from concentrated solar plants (CSP) is immense. In his book, *Sustainable Energy—Without the Hot Air*, British physicist David MacKay said CSP plants covering 5 million acres in the Southwest—an area about the size of New Jersey—would generate enough power to meet 10 percent of our energy needs.

CSP is capable of generating electricity in large volumes at times when it's needed most. The plants pour electrons into the grid at the hottest times of day during the summer, when air conditioners are running full bore and power demand peaks.

The U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), which oversees 256 million acres of public lands in the West, has estimated that nearly 12 percent of BLM lands, or 29.95 million acres, has solar energy production potential.

Today, wind and solar account for only 2.6 percent of America's total electricity generating capacity. That is likely to increase. Between 2004 and 2008, wind capacity grew by an annual average rate of 32 percent.

Interest in CSP development is rocketing upward. On June 29, the Interior Department set aside 670,000 acres of federal lands in the Southwest as "solar energy study areas." The BLM is reviewing 158 applications to build solar plants with generating capacity of almost 100,000 megawatts, enough to serve one-third of America's homes.

WILDLIFE IMPACTS

The growth of wind and solar, in part, is driven by their attractive environmental characteristics.

Unlike coal, they do not emit carbon dioxide, smog-forming air pollutants, or mercury.

Unlike nuclear plants, there are no long-lived radioactive wastes to isolate from the environment for millennia or to recycle in advanced reactors that may not be commercially ready for decades.

Low operating cost is another attractive feature. Unlike natural gas, wind and solar are not subject to fuel price volatility. The fuel is free and always will be, as long as the wind blows and the sun rises in the east.

But neither is free of environmental impacts. For wind, bird and bat mortality caused by collisions with turbines, along with habitat fragmentation and barriers to migration routes, are issues that have drawn scrutiny from wildlife scientists, conservationists, and the wind industry.

Wildlife mortality linked to wind facilities varies by region and species. Lack of adequate research and post-construction monitoring, however, makes it difficult to draw definitive conclusions about the impact of wind turbines on wildlife, a 2005 Government Accountability Office report said.

For perspective, wind power accounts for a small fraction of bird mortality linked to human factors. Others include collisions with buildings and communications towers, pesticide poisoning, and predation by domestic and feral cats.

WATER CONSUMPTION

CSP faces other types of environmental issues. One is water, always at a premium in the desert Southwest. All of the concentrated solar plants in operation in the U.S. today are "parabolic trough" designs, which use curved reflectors to concentrate the sun's heat onto tubes filled with an oily fluid. The hot fluid is used to heat water into steam, which is then used to turn power-generating turbines.

CSP plants in operation today consume approximately the same amount of water per kilowatt-hour generated as coal and nuclear plants, totaling about 800 gallons for every megawatt-hour fed to the grid.

There are alternative technologies that could reduce water demand, but they are more expensive than conventional water-cooling methods.

A compromise suggested in a Department of Energy report to Congress could be to use hybrid systems that employ both water and air for cooling. Hybrid systems could reduce water use in a parabolic trough CSP system from 44 to 84 percent. The tradeoffs would be 1-4 percent output reduction and 8 percent increase in costs.

Another issue is land consumption. Unlike wind energy facilities, which can co-exist on open land with farms or ranches, CSP sites—typically 3,000 acres in extent for facilities with 250 to 400 megawatts of capacity, according to BLM—are dedicated exclusively to power generation.

The National Park Service has raised concerns about the potential impacts of large solar arrays on desert parks, including Death Valley, Lake Mead National Recreation Area, and Mojave National Preserve. In a February 5 letter sent to the BLM, the Park Service pointed to potential impacts on wildlife habitat and migration corridors, along with impacts on desert scenery, natural sounds, and dark skies.

TRANSMISSION CORRIDORS

Transmission lines to carry power from remote generating sites to urban load centers are the source of similar land impact issues. Federal agencies received numerous comments about transmission impacts on wildlife, scenery, national parks, and wilderness as part of an environmental impact statement on proposed energy corridors on Western public lands.

The EIS, finalized in late 2008, designated 131 corridors on 3.3 million acres of federal lands in 11 Western states. The purpose of the corridors, required by the Energy Policy Act of 2005, is to streamline consideration of project permits.

One way to mitigate transmission impacts, according to a February 2009 report from the Solar Energy Industries Association and American Wind Energy Association, is building lines rated at extra high-voltage. High-capacity transmission lines can move more power over fewer wires than lower capacity lines, helping to mitigate impacts on land and wildlife, the report noted.

One line rated at 765,000 volts can carry as much current as six lines rated at 345,000 volts. While the higher voltage lines cost

continued on the next page

more than twice as much to build per mile, their per-mile cost for each megawatt of transmission capacity is less than 50 percent that of the lower voltage lines.

In their report, the associations called for building extra high-voltage "green power superhighways" to connect CSP and wind plants to America's transmission grid. Without those, the report said, wind and solar growth would be stunted.

A solar development alternative that bypasses the costs and controversies of transmission construction is "distributed generation." Instead of building large-scale concentrated solar plants, the distributed alternative is to build solar photovoltaic systems on rooftops.

Southern California Edison, a utility that serves 14 million people, plans to install 250 megawatts of photovoltaic (PV) panels on 150 commercial building rooftops in its service area. Connecting panels directly to the grid, a 2008 Edison press release said, would eliminate "the costly, time-consuming step of building new transmission lines."

A distributed generation alternative to concentrated solar plants, however, would be more expensive for meeting California's 33 percent renewable portfolio standard by 2020, a June 2009 report from the California Public Utilities Commission concluded.

Building only natural gas-fired combustion turbines to meet the state's demand growth would result in average California electricity prices of 15.4 cents per kilowatt-hour ($2008) in 2020, which is 16.7 percent higher than current prices. Meeting the 33 percent renewables requirement would require a near tripling of renewably generated electricity and seven new transmission lines, bringing average prices to 16.9 cents. An expanded share of distributed generation in a plan to hit the 33 percent mark would result in an average price of 18.1 cents.

"Even if solar PV technology costs drop dramatically, the deployment costs associated with thousands of megawatts of distributed PV could still be a challenge," the California PUC report noted.

CONSERVATIVE APPROACH: GET THE FACTS, PLAN AHEAD

In an attempt to steer concentrated solar to areas with both high production potential and manageable environmental concerns, the Interior Department designated 24 "solar energy study areas" in six Western states, which have a solar energy capacity of up to 135,000 megawatts. One criterion for including lands in the study areas was proximity to transmission lines.

The study areas focus on BLM locations that receive intense solar exposure but are not conservation lands. Excluded from the study areas are units of the National Landscape Conservation System, areas designated as critical habitat for threatened and endangered species, wildlife management areas, and lands with prized scenic qualities.

For wind, biologists recommend independent studies both before and after construction to understand wildlife habitat characteristics and bird behavior at wind facility sites. At the Foote Creek Rim wind project in Wyoming, for example, pre-construction studies showed that raptors tended to use habitat within 50 meters of the rim edge. The solution, consequently, was to build turbines away from the edge.

In addition, biologists have called for standards to identify problem sites where wind energy development should be avoided in order to protect bird and bat populations.

Developing big wind and big solar is critical for building energy security, creating jobs in new manufacturing industries, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants. A careful, conservative approach to planning development would allow their clean energy to be tapped without creating new sets of environmental problems.

Jim DiPeso *is Vice President for Policy and Communications for Republicans for Environmental Protection.*

Leader Profile:

Congresswoman Mary Bono Mack (R-CA)

Congresswoman Mary Bono Mack's southern California district is a vast swathe of rugged country, stretching some 200 miles from the eastern suburbs of the Los Angeles metropolitan area to the Colorado River. The district features a stunning array of natural treasures, including Joshua Tree National Park and remote desert wilderness areas.

Bono Mack has emerged as a leading congressional conservative championing the protection of pristine landscapes for the benefit of current and future generations. One of her signature conservation achievements was getting legislation passed to establish the 272,000-acre Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument, a natural and cultural showcase that includes five ecological zones ranging from desert to alpine, more than 500 plant and animal species, and artifacts from the Cahuilla tribe, which has inhabited the area continuously for at least three millennia.

The deserts that make up much of her district also are prime locations for developing solar, wind, and geothermal resources that can deliver clean, secure energy for America's needs. Bono Mack has become an outspoken proponent of diversifying America's energy choices in order to stimulate development of new industries, cut pollution, and reduce the country's dangerous dependence on oil.

Bono Mack has represented California's 45th District since winning a special election in 1998 to fill the seat vacated by the death of her husband, Congressman Sonny Bono. Bono Mack has carried forward the late Congressman Bono's top conservation cause, restoration of the Salton Sea. She co-chairs a congressional task force working to fund restoration of California's largest inland body of water, a critical link for millions of migratory birds using the Pacific Flyway.

Bono Mack was born in Cleveland in 1961 and graduated from the University of Southern California in 1984 with a bachelor of fine arts degree. Before her election to Congress, Bono Mack worked as a restaurant

business manager. In 2007, she married Congressman Connie Mack IV, who represents Florida's 14th District.

Now serving her sixth full term, Bono Mack serves on the powerful House Energy and Commerce Committee and its energy subcommittee, where she played a key role in advancing the American Clean Energy and Security Act. The legislation limits greenhouse gas emissions and requires utilities to source a minimum percentage of their electricity from renewable resources and efficiency savings.

Bono Mack's vote for the legislation was not popular with other congressional conservatives. Nevertheless, Bono Mack argued that despite the legislation's flaws, it was an important step forward for spurring investments in renewable energy technologies. Encouraging the growth of cleaner energy resources and green technologies is "an issue that transcends political party," Bono Mack wrote in a May 21 commentary.

Bono Mack also played a leadership role in securing approval of omnibus public lands legislation that included two of her more recent conservation initiatives. The legislation, signed into law earlier this year, gave permanent legal status to the National Landscape Conservation System, America's newest network of conservation lands.

The conservation system, located on lands overseen by the Bureau of Land Management, includes 26 million acres of wilderness areas, monuments, conservation areas, wild and scenic rivers, and national trails with outstanding scenic, ecological, and historic resources. Bono Mack co-founded a bipartisan congressional caucus to codify the conservation system, which was established administratively in 2000, and to

continued on the back page

Leader Profile: Rep. Mary Bono Mack

continued from the inside back page

secure adequate funding and management resources for its units.

The legislation also incorporated Bono Mack's California Desert and Mountain Heritage Act, which designated 10 new wilderness areas totaling 190,000 acres, added three stream reaches to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers system, and expanded the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains monument.

For Bono Mack, the lands for which she has won legal protection are not lines on a map. For the benefit of other lawmakers, she has led hiking and horseback tours of her district's mountain ranges to show off their stark beauty and amazing wildlife.

Stewardship and passing on an inheritance are central to true conservatism. As Bono Mack said, "Just as I had the opportunity to experience this country's natural landscape as a child, I believe that this invaluable resource must be sustained for future generations to enjoy."

About ConservAmerica

ConservAmerica—recognized as one of the "Best in America" by Independent Charities of America—is a 501(c)(3) non-partisan organization dedicated to building a conservative constituency for conservation. It offers conferences and workshops and produces publications like *Conservation **is** Conservative!®*, *For Spacious Skies: A Conservative Citizen's Guide to Clean Air*, and *Good Stewards: A Conservative Citizen's Guide to Climate Change*.

For more information, please visit our web site, *www.conservamerica.org*, or call 269-651-1808.

About Republicans for Environmental Protection

Republicans for Environmental Protection (**REP**) is a 501(c)(4) non-profit membership organization dedicated to restoring the Republican Party's great conservation tradition. Its signature publication is *The Green Elephant*.

For more information—or to join REP—please visit *www.rep.org* or call 269-651-1808.

ConservAmerica
971 Centreville Rd., #139; Sturgis, MI 49091-2502

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 7
Three Rivers, MI

C.E.P. Quarterly
Vol. 4, No. 4