



## DrumBeat: September 5, 2008

Posted by [Leanan](#) on September 5, 2008 - 10:22am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

### [U.S. highway fund crushed by cutback in driving](#)

NEW YORK (CNNMoney.com) -- An unprecedented decline in driving will deplete the federal Highway Trust Fund by the end of September prompting the government to ask Congress for an \$8 billion emergency infusion Friday.

Gasoline sales are crucial to maintaining the nation's highway infrastructure. About 90% of the fund's total revenues comes from taxes on motor fuels, according to a July report from the Congressional Budget Office.

Without the additional money, the Department of Transportation will not be able to fully reimburse states for their highway investments. Already in September, department officials are projecting getting \$4.4 billion in state requests but collecting only \$2.7 billion in revenues.

### [Brazil May Have 70 Billion Barrels of Oil Near Tupi](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Brazil has between 30 billion and 70 billion barrels of oil in its so-called pre-salt fields near the Tupi discovery off the coast of Rio de Janeiro state, said Julio Bueno, the state's economic affairs secretary.

The oil estimate refers to fields previously discovered by Petroleo Brasileiro SA, Brazil's state-controlled oil company, BG Group Plc and other companies in the Santos Basin, Bueno said today in an interview with Bloomberg Television in London.

``We think that in the areas that Petrobras and other companies have already discovered we have 30 billion to 70 billion," said Bueno, a former Petrobras executive. ``It's not an easy task to say how much you have, but it's a good amount to think about."

### [OPEC's Kingdom Built On Sand](#)

LONDON - As the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries prepares for its meeting on Tuesday to decide whether to cut supplies to the market, one member in

particular will be feeling the pressure of oil's two-month tumble: Saudi Arabia.

### [Peak Oil and the Media](#) (audio)

Why isn't mainstream media explaining oil decline, and it's impact on society? Vancouverpeakoil.org presents a panel of 5 journalists: Rex Weyler, Barbara Jaffe, Charlie Smith, Sara Robinson and Alex Smith. How to organize, use media, bypass the mainstream.

### [Australia: Fighting on empty](#)

The Australian Defence Force consumes annually 125 million litres of diesel and 200 million litres of aviation fuel, according to government statistics. The strategy and capabilities of the ADF are dependent on oil and they are exposed to the same price fluctuations that are wreaking havoc on business and household budgets.

Considering the extensive lead time and lifespan for Defence capability acquisitions and the poor projections for oil, it is little surprise that there is a growing chorus of concern coming from within Defence ranks.

### [OPEC Oil Supply Cut Would Be 'Wrong Step,' Says EU's Piebalgs](#)

(Bloomberg) -- A supply cut by OPEC next week would be the ``wrong step" because it would only temporarily boost crude prices, the European Union's Energy Commissioner Andris Piebalgs said.

``If OPEC cuts supply perhaps there will be a rebound, but then it will come down sharply," Piebalgs said today in a Bloomberg interview at a conference in Cernobbio, Italy.

### [Rice says Libya is about more than oil](#)

TRIPOLI (Reuters) - Washington's rapprochement with OPEC member Libya is motivated by more than just the U.S. need for oil, top U.S. diplomat Condoleezza Rice said on a historic visit to Tripoli on Friday.

Rice is making the first visit to the north African country by a U.S. secretary of state since 1953, a trip U.S. officials hope will end decades of enmity and violence five years after Libya gave up its weapons of mass destruction program in 2003.

### [Dirty Little Secret](#)

The transformation of Sasol from a company with the most dubious of pasts into a company with the brightest of futures illuminates our can't-live-with-it, can't-live-without-it relationship to oil. The future well-being of the planet depends on our reduction of fossil-fuel emissions. On the other hand, the future well-being of much of humanity depends on our continued use of fossil fuels. The way companies like Sasol negotiate this dilemma will help determine the future for all of us.

### [LOOP restarts offshore operations after Gustav](#)

NEW YORK (Reuters) - The Louisiana Offshore Oil Port, the only U.S. deepwater oil port supplying crude to about half of the nation's refining capacity, said on Friday it restarted offloading tankers in the wake of Hurricane Gustav.

"The LOOP infrastructure was not damaged by Hurricane Gustav which passed directly over the LOOP platform," the company said in a press release.

### [Texas refinery fire sends Valero shares lower](#)

The San Antonio-based company said the fire occurred Thursday and it had taken down the cracker for repairs -- an outage that's expected to last for seven to 10 days.

As such, gasoline production will be reduced by about 80,000 barrels a day. Distillates output will be reduced by 7,500 barrels a day.

### [Exxon restarting Louisiana refineries after Gustav](#)

"The Baton Rouge Refinery and Chalmette Refining began a safe and sequenced start-up process on 5 September," the company said in a press release. "It is anticipated that additional units will restart throughout the weekend as we work to bring the facilities back to normal operations."

### [Behind all the smiles at TNK-BP, another oil row looms](#)

The real problem is the overall strategy. Will TNK-BP really be able to continue serving the interests of BP shareholders or must it now do something more expansive and potentially risky. It is unlikely that BP shareholders will welcome the idea that the Siberian oil pump is to be transformed into a new company with ventures all over the place and all manner of distractions. Big oil companies tend to come a cropper when "focus" is lost.

## [Oil prices, technology, and the cost of ignorance](#)

Many opportunities exist to use a little understanding, a little technology, and a little capital to make a significant decrease in fuel consumption. But rest assured that these things will not happen.

## [Stepping Off the Gas](#)

When it comes to fuel prices and energy independence, the watchword is 'no pain, no gain.'

## [Toyota looks to double Prius sales in Europe](#)

Toyota, the world's second-largest carmaker, aims to double European sales of its Prius model as higher fuel costs and tighter rules on carbon dioxide emissions increase the gasoline-electric hybrid's appeal.

## [The 65 mpg Ford the U.S. Can't Have](#)

Ford's Fiesta EConetic gets an astonishing 65 mpg, but the carmaker can't afford to sell it in the U.S.

## [Norfolk Southern Fights Virginia City on Ethanol Site](#)

(Bloomberg) -- As the U.S. Congress pushes the use of ethanol to counter high gasoline prices, a city 10 miles from the Capitol in Washington is pushing back.

Residents of Alexandria, Virginia, are up in arms because Norfolk Southern Corp. built an ethanol-transfer station near their neighborhood, where the flammable fuel is unloaded from rail cars to trucks. The dispute reached a flashpoint in late July, when a fire broke out on tracks near the facility, 600 feet (183 meters) from an elementary school and \$800,000 townhouses.

## [For Bicyclists, a Widening Patchwork World](#)

While Northern Europe and Japan have figured out how to make bicycle commuting a safe, cheap alternative to driving, the United States, Canada, Australia and Britain have not. And the world's two most populous nations, China and India, are discarding bicycles in favor of cars. A rising middle class in both countries views cycling as an unhappy reminder of the recent past, when nearly everyone was poor.

Still, among the world's most developed countries, a reliable recipe has emerged for

making cycling a mainstream means of getting to work.

### [Meet the urban sharecroppers](#)

It was a small notice, in between the ads for childminding and English lessons. "Free gardening. I will cultivate an abundant vegetable plot for you in your garden and we will share the produce 50/50." Then a number.

When I got home I looked at my garden - unused, unloved, under wood chip. I looked at Google Earth. Almost half of the 3.1m households in London have a garden. Put together, they would occupy an area roughly the size of the Isle of Wight, and could insulate us against food price hikes and keep us all in fresh vegetables. Most are lawns or crazy paving.

### [City's flooded future](#)

Between the 1-foot global sea-level rise, the addition of a high tide, the addition of a 2-foot storm surge plus the storm waves on top of it all and the entire Charleston Peninsula will be flooded. In fact with a 1-foot rise in sea level, even a small to moderate storm occurring at low tide will likely flood large parts of the city.

### [Cheap clothes, clean conscience](#)

Last week, the House of Lords science committee criticised a culture of fast fashion for contributing to the growing amount of domestic waste in Britain. Textiles make up 3% of the 30m tonnes of waste collected from households by local authorities every year, and the committee accused retailers of encouraging consumers "to dispose of clothes which have only been worn a few times in favour of new, cheap garments which themselves will also go out of fashion and be discarded within a matter of months."

But with the average household's disposable income down £2,500 in the past 12 months - the first drop for 11 years - it is unlikely that shoppers are about to swap regular purchases from the lower end of the high street for expensive well-made and ethically sourced fashion.

### [Breakdowns spark National Grid crisis in power supply](#)

The crumbling state of Britain's electricity network was exposed yesterday when power station breakdowns caused the first energy shortage of the autumn.

National Grid was forced to call for more power from electricity generators after a series of unexpected breakdowns left the company with an insufficient safety cushion.

The company, which operates the electricity lines across Britain, requires a safety cushion of between 2,000 and 4,000 megawatts above peak demand. When it fell short yesterday, power suppliers were asked to bring all their available generating capacity online, including expensive oil-fired units.

The move came as Gordon Brown vowed to end the “dictatorship of oil” with a billion-pound plan to boost renewable energy supplies and make Britain more energy-efficient.

### [Warning after wave of tractor thefts](#)

The Mutual used the release of the figures to remind farmers that with new and secondhand machinery values soaring because of global shortages they should be reviewing their valuations and updating their insurance policies.

Mr Price said thieves has also in the last year stolen more metal and fuel from farms in response to rising prices for both. Irrigation pipes, gates and even heavy-metal machinery had been taken.

Diesel thefts were up 30%. It had also seen a new phenomenon – an increasing number of thefts of central heating oil from rural homes.

### [Coal India May Import Fuel This Year for First Time](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Coal India Ltd., the state-owned monopoly, may import the fuel this year for the first time to tide over a shortage of the commodity faced by power producers, Chairman Partha Bhattacharyya said.

“This is uncharted territory for us because we have never imported before,” Bhattacharyya said today in New Delhi. The company may buy 4 million metric tons of coal from overseas after buyers confirm their orders, he said.

### [Gas-line gridlock slows removal of storm debris](#)

Lengthy lines of motorists at gasoline stations are causing major congestion on Baton Rouge’s major streets, complicating city-parish storm debris-collection efforts in the wake of Hurricane Gustav.

...Newkirk said panic-stricken motorists are blocking major roadways and clogging major intersections to get gasoline in some of the worst-hit areas of East Baton Rouge. As a result, Newkirk said, his crews have been forced to focus debris pickup in the northern and eastern parts of the parish, which weren’t necessarily the worst hit but don’t have the traffic congestion plaguing other areas.

### [Petrol Panic: Fuel shortages stranded many Armenian motorists in August](#)

The wartime situation in Georgia has shown just how heavily people in Armenia rely on goods imported from abroad for their vital day-to-day activities.

### [Idemitsu to cut Q4 fuel output, seals Mexico deal](#)

TOKYO (Reuters) - Idemitsu Kosan Co, Japan's No. 3 oil refiner, will cut fourth-quarter crude refining by 14 percent and sealed its first term export deal in over four years to make up for falling fuel demand in the world's third-largest consumer.

### [Iran may Reciprocate Western Sanctions with Similar Move](#)

TEHRAN (FNA)- Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad dismissed sanctions by the world powers against his country as illegal, and said that Iran may impose sanctions against the world's predominant forces in response.

### [GM races to boost small-car output, plans extra shift in Ohio](#)

DETROIT (MarketWatch) -- General Motors Corp., still struggling to meet demand for its most fuel-efficient vehicles, will soon start running weekend shifts at a compact-car factory in Lordstown, Ohio.

The auto maker said Thursday it is trying to lure enough workers to run a third shift at the plant on Saturday, in addition to two full shifts already slated for each weekend in September.

### [Nuclear revival needs constructors to deliver](#)

LONDON (Reuters) - The world's nuclear industry is ready for a "nuclear renaissance", but it is up to the reactor builders to make it happen. Industry sources said that constructors must build reactors on schedule and within cost constraints.

### [Budget crunch requires schools to get creative](#)

As many states begin the new school year, they face serious budget shortfalls. Just two months ago, states across the country had combined budget shortfalls of more than \$40 billion. That is a staggering amount to say the least, especially since the cost of running schools is on the increase.

The cost of running buses and providing school lunches has seen the most significant



increases for many school budgets, yet the districts are told to cut back. Nevada is not alone in its financial crisis. States such as Kentucky, Alabama and Rhode Island all face the same challenges during the upcoming school year.

### [Pay-as-you-drive plan good for wallets - and environment](#)

When it comes to traffic reduction, California needs all the help it can get. And sometimes the only thing to finally get people out of their cars is to offer them cold, hard cash.

The proposal for a voluntary pay-as-you-drive insurance program for California drivers, being pushed by Insurance Commissioner Steve Poizner, might be one of the carrots that actually works. The draft proposal would let drivers have the option of buying auto insurance plans that are based on the number of miles they drive.

[Aramco Confirms Having Brought 500,000-b/d Khursaniyah Field Onstream](#): *The 500,000-b/d light crude Khursaniyah field has been confirmed by Saudi Aramco to be onstream, without further specification of whether its production supplied the bulk of July's production increase.*

**Significance** The Khursaniyah field represents the largest single increment in Saudi production capacity coming onstream in years and lifts the Kingdom's overall production capacity to around 11.8 million b/d.

**Implications** Having originally been delayed since December 2007 because of global material shortages suffered in the construction of its associated gas-processing plant, early testing of the field began some months ago. The perceived failure of Saudi Arabia to react to rapid crude price increases in the first and second quarters of this year, not increasing production until July, did, however, raise the suspicion that early Khursaniyah production was used when the increases finally came.

**Outlook** Having brought the field onstream, Saudi Aramco's light crude production capacity has been significantly boosted and eventual future production cuts are more likely to affect its heavy oil production. If it should be revealed that Khursaniyah *was* used for the bulk of the recently added export volumes, Saudi Arabia's critics would continue to spread scepticism over whether its swing production capacity is real or not.

### [Despite higher fuel costs, retailers cut shipping rates](#)

Over the past few years, retailers have increasingly discovered a powerful way to entice shoppers to buy during the crucial Christmas season: slash shipping costs.

Much higher fuel costs this season raised fears that free or cut-rate shipping would go the way of \$2.50-a-gallon gas. But as retailers grapple with the shaky U.S. economy, many have calculated that they can't afford to put off shoppers with hefty shipping



costs, even if it means eating higher fuel costs.

### [Random Oil](#)

Oil prices seem to be in free-fall. After averaging a staggering \$137 a barrel over the first week of July, they were down to \$109 a barrel over the final week of August.

Where are prices going next? Who knows? Bearish talk about bubbles bursting and bullish talk about peak oil disguise the fact that the future direction of oil prices is unknown and unknowable. Neither investors nor politicians ought to be betting the economic house on any particular vision of "our energy future."

### [The World as We See It](#): *4 reasons why this may be the worst crisis since the 1930s – and 4 projections for what's going to happen*

The clear and present danger is that we are now using several times more oil than we are discovering. The world currently produces about 310 billion barrels of oil per decade. That amounts to about three times the current discovery rate of 100 billion barrels per decade.

According to the Peak Oil calculations, we have already used about half of the energy stored over the last 100 million years. Against that, we have a steady increase in demand emanating from population growth and economic development, especially in Asia. This, coupled with the dearth of major new discoveries, assures that energy markets will remain at high prices, for the foreseeable future. The current big drop from almost \$150 to \$110 has happened from a slowing economy and from some conservation at the extreme high gas pump prices, but the long term view is that the lack of reasonable alternative to petroleum argues for continued higher prices returning to the previous peak in the year ahead.

### [Economist on a mission](#)

The chief economist for the American Petroleum Institute is trying to change people's perception of the industry.

John Felmy said a recent industry survey of 1,500 people showed that some public impressions aren't correct — such as where our country's oil comes from — so the institute is embarking on an educational program.

"We learned after (hurricanes) Katrina and Rita that people don't know much about the oil industry," Felmy told the Independent Record's editorial board on Wednesday. "We as an industry have done a bad job in the last 150 years in educating people, and we are an important part of their lives."

“Having (television characters) J.R. Ewing as a spokesperson is not really good, nor is Jed Clampett for that matter.”

### [Senator Mary Margaret Whipple's Richmond Report](#)

Lead-off speaker at the Commission's first meeting last week was Dr. Robert L. Hirsch, author of the 2005 report commissioned by the U.S. Department of Energy titled "Peaking of World Oil Production: Impacts, Mitigation, and Risk Management". In this report, Dr. Hirsch and co-author Roger Bezdek did not set a date for the peaking of oil production, but pointed out that starting to prepare in advance would reduce the impact but that waiting until the peak was upon us would lead to serious economic and societal problems.

In his presentation to the Commission, Dr. Hirsch introduced the concept of peak oil to members of the Commission and those attending the meeting. While I know this is not a new topic to readers of the News-Press, it is not familiar to many people so this background was necessary. Then Dr. Hirsch emphasized that a liquid fuels shortage, a consequence of peak oil, is real and already impacting both the United States and the world at large.

He believes that we need to do everything we can think of to address the problem, although he said that corn ethanol was a mistake as we really don't want fuel to compete with food. But all other forms of mitigation will be necessary in the near future. It was a serious, almost gloomy message, but one that the Commonwealth needs to respond to.

### [U.S. warship carries aid to Georgian port of Poti](#)

POTI, Georgia (AP) — The flagship of the U.S. Navy's Mediterranean fleet anchored outside the key Georgian port of Poti on Friday, bringing in tons of humanitarian aid to a port still partially occupied by hundreds of Russian troops.

Although Russia has watched the arrival of the USS Mount Whitney and other U.S. ships in recent weeks with deep suspicion, a Foreign Ministry official said Russia does not plan any military action to the U.S. naval presence in the Black Sea.

### [Energy Independence and Prop 7](#)

For our region, Santa Barbara County, weaning ourselves from fossil fuels on a net basis by 2030 will require more than *doubling* our expected electricity demand by 2030 — to have enough to electrify the transportation sector and natural gas sectors — and producing all that electricity from renewables. In other words, our county needs about a 200 percent renewable portfolio standard by 2030 to achieve our goal of weaning our region from fossil fuels. At the same time, we must dramatically increase the efficiency with which we use energy in all sectors.

### [Australia: Garnaut wants 10% emissions cut by 2020](#)

The federal government's top climate adviser recommends Australia cut its emissions by 10 per cent by 2020, a target slammed by conservationists as "laughable".

### [California "water bank" in works amid drought](#)

SAN FRANCISCO (Reuters) - California's state government is forming a "water bank" to buy water for local water agencies at risk of shortages next year should a current drought persist, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger said on Thursday.

Schwarzenegger in June declared the most populous U.S. state to officially be in drought and declared nine counties in its farm-rich Central Valley to be in a state of emergency because water supplies were so low after two years of below-average rainfall.

### [Oil's climb forced companies to become leaner](#)

NEW YORK - Conventional wisdom had long held that some industries would collapse if oil topped \$100 a barrel. As oil neared \$150, sending costs higher for everything from jet fuel to plastic jars, the question was how many companies would succumb.

The surprising answer: Not many. Some have even thrived.

Companies have culled unprofitable products, cut production costs and passed along price increases. Airlines have laid off thousands of employees, dropped routes, sold planes and raised fares 20 percent in the last year — the fastest rate of increase in 15 years. Consumer product makers have shrunk everything from tubs of Smart Balance Buttery Spread to jugs of laundry detergent. Retailers from The Yankee Candle Co. Inc. to Target Corp. have passed on higher prices to consumers.

### [OPEC likely to trim oil supply as economy slows](#)

LONDON/DUBAI (Reuters) - Slower demand, an economic downturn and cheaper oil could convince OPEC it needs to trim supply unofficially, but the producer group is expected to leave public output targets unchanged when it meets next week.

### [Iran says \\$100 oil "appropriate"](#)

TEHRAN — Iran's OPEC governor said an oil price of \$100 (U.S.) per barrel was "appropriate" in current conditions, the Oil Ministry's news agency Shana reported on

Friday.

The oil minister of the world's fourth-largest crude producer had said earlier in the week that \$100 a barrel was the lowest appropriate price. Crude has tumbled from a record \$147 in July and was trading on Friday at below \$107.

### [OPEC Is Unlikely to Cut Production, Goldman's O'Neill Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- OPEC is unlikely to cut supply at next week's meeting in Vienna because of the hurricane season, Goldman Sachs Group Inc. Chief Economist Jim O'Neill said.

### [Oil operations resume, storms on the horizon](#)

HOUSTON - Even as thousands of workers returned to their posts in the oil-rich Gulf of Mexico after Hurricane Gustav's mild blow, other storms traveling across the Atlantic Ocean served as a reminder that the heart of hurricane season is here.

### [Chevron says Pascagoula refinery ramping up](#)

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Chevron Corp said Friday its 330,000 barrel-per-day oil refinery in Pascagoula, Mississippi, was ramping up to normal rates after Hurricane Gustav.

"The refinery began returning to planned production rates on Thursday, Sept. 4, when the U.S. Coast Guard reopened the ship channel leading to the refinery," Chevron said in a press release.

### [Rising oil price could lead to China industrial restructuring](#)

CHANGCHUN (Xinhua) -- Concerns of a surging oil price could mean the industrial restructuring and upgrading of China's industries, according to a United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) official here on Friday.

"The commodity price hike has severely impacted the Chinese economy, but it also happens at a good time as China is facing industry restructuring challenges," Li Yuefen, the UNCTAD Debt and Development Finance Branch head, said.

### [EU moves to loosen Russia's 'energy stranglehold'](#)

EU, European Union, Gazprom. Energy Security, Oil, Gas European Commission officials

are currently carrying out a feasibility study to examine the creation of gas stockpiles to prevent Russia using the threat of switching the lights out or turning off heating supplies to pressure the EU.

"There will be legislation along the lines of the Strategic Oil Stocks Directive in October or November," said an official.

### [BP's Russian defeat a market victory](#)

In the middle of 17th century Paris, Savinien Cyrano de Bergerac (that's the real one, not the 19th century stage character), wrote a fantasy about a voyage to the moon. He described several contrivances to get there, in addition to his own. One, which reportedly delivered the biblical prophet Elijah, involved a large magnetic ball and an iron chariot. To propel the latter into the sky, and thence to the orbit of the moon, the prophet tossed the ball into the air so that the magnetic force would draw the chariot after it. He was obliged to keep catching and tossing to sustain the upward momentum. When it was within gravitational range of the moon, the magnetic ball was tossed downward, and then upward again, to break the speed of the chariot's fall.

Russia isn't the moon. But BP has been trying a variant of the magnetic-ball-and-chariot to hang onto the 23% of its global oil reserves located there, 25% of its current oil production, and a comparable amount of its market capitalization. Rarely has so much value in global energy resource depended on such a theory of motion. Robert Dudley, chief executive of TNK-BP - the 50/50 joint venture BP has operated for five years with Fridman, Len Blavatnik and Victor Vekselberg - has also been using several quaint contrivances to defy the laws of gravity.

### [Palin's pipeline exists — but only on paper](#)

ANCHORAGE, Alaska - A long-delayed natural gas pipeline championed by Gov. Sarah Palin that would carry supplies from Alaska to Canada and then to the lower 48 states exists in concept only and is years away from fruition.

### [US energy policy 'beholden' to oil multinationals](#)

The most full-throated speech of the Democrat convention on energy came right before Clinton appeared on stage, when Schweitzer fired up the delegates by ripping into "petro-dictators" and multinational oil companies that he says US energy policy is beholden to.

### [No Hope for a Sensible Energy Policy](#)

I have bad news for all those who think that the retirement of George W. Bush will

somehow initiate a golden--or green--age in America. It won't. Just take a close look at the promises being made by the two men who have now been formally nominated as their parties' standard bearers in the fight to control the White House.

### [Crude Future: Economics dictates that we'll never run out of oil](#)

Are we running out of oil? The question seems silly. "Yes" is the obvious answer.

Or is it?

That there is less oil in the ground today than there was yesterday is true. That there was less oil in the ground yesterday than there was in 1870 is also true. But "running out of oil" is not as much a question of physics as it is one of economics. And economics assures us that we will never run out of oil.

### [Norway surveys Troll field for carbon storage](#)

OSLO (Reuters) - Norway has begun seismic surveys at its biggest North Sea oil and gas field, Troll, to determine whether carbon dioxide emissions could be stored there, energy officials said on Friday.

Troll is touted as one of three possible North Sea locations for storing carbon produced by gas-fired power plants in the coastal cities of Mongstad and Kaarstoe in a bid to curb emissions of heat-trapping gases blamed for global warming.

### [Feds warn climate change could harm giant sequoias](#)

VISALIA, Calif. - Federal researchers are warning that warming temperatures could soon cause California's giant sequoia trees to die off more quickly unless forest managers plan with an eye toward climate change and the impact of a longer, harsher wildfire season.

### [Experts offer scaled-back sea level rise forecast](#)

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Worldwide sea levels may rise by about 2.6 to 6.6 feet by 2100 thanks to global warming, but dire predictions of larger increases seem unrealistic, U.S. scientists said on Thursday.

They examined scenarios for loss of ice from Greenland, Antarctica and the world's smaller glaciers and ice caps into the world's oceans, as well as ocean expansion simply due to rising water temperatures.

Their calculations yielded estimates for global sea level increases by the end of the



century that are lower than many existing projections, but alarming nonetheless.

### [Asian soot, smog may boost global warming in US](#)

WASHINGTON - Smog, soot and other particles like the kind often seen hanging over Beijing add to global warming and may raise summer temperatures in the American heartland by three degrees in about 50 years, says a new federal science report released Thursday.

These overlooked, shorter-term pollutants — mostly from burning wood and kerosene and from driving trucks and cars — cause more localized warming than once thought, the authors of the report say. They contend there should be a greater effort to attack this type of pollution for faster results.



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