



## Drumbeat: July 29, 2011

Posted by [Leanan](#) on July 29, 2011 - 9:43am

### [Arkansas commission votes to ban wells](#)

EL DORADO, Ark. – The Arkansas Oil and Gas Commission on Wednesday voted to ban wells for the disposal of natural gas drilling fluids from a region where hundreds of earthquakes have struck, a move officials said was necessary to prevent a potential catastrophe.

Commissioners voted 6-0 to close a disposal well between Greenbrier and Enola in the Fayetteville Shale, an area rich in natural gas that stretches across the state. The commission also voted 7-0 to issue a moratorium on new disposal wells in a 1,150-square-mile segment of the shale in central Arkansas north of Conway, the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette reported.

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### [DOE: 6.77 Million Bbls Of US Oil-Sale Crude Oil Delivered As Of Friday](#)

NEW YORK -(Dow Jones)- Some 22.1% of the 30.64 million barrels of crude oil sold from the government's emergency stockpile has been delivered as of Friday, the Energy Department said.

In its second weekly update of oil movements from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, the DOE said five million barrels of crude oil has been delivered since July 21. In addition to the 1.77 million barrels reported delivered last week, a total of 6.77 million barrels has been shipped so far.

### [US natgas rig count falls by 12 to 877-Baker Hughes](#)

NEW YORK (Reuters) - The number of rigs drilling for natural gas in the United States fell by 12 this week to 877, the first drop in three weeks, data from oil services firm Baker Hughes showed on Friday.

### [Huntsman energy speech ruffles GOP feathers](#)

Republican Jon Huntsman signaled an unconventional presidential bid when he teased his campaign launch last month with videos of a motocross rider in the Utah mountains.

But his keynote speech on Thursday to an environmental group that backs cap-and-trade regulations reviled by most in his party is drawing even bigger double-takes.

### [Victories over Ontario and BC Highways](#)

This week the government of Ontario cancelled the controversial \$6 billion Niagara to Toronto freeway. A broad coalition of groups vigorously opposed the highway across the Niagara escarpment, and pushed for investment in transit and freight rail instead.

### [O.K., Smart Guys: Fix the Energy Problem](#)

The U.S. first became a net importer of oil in 1948. The intervening decades have led Americans down a steady path of price spikes, shortages, and compromised foreign policy decisions. Imported fuel means expensive gasoline, lost jobs, and hobbled industries, while climate change poses risks as dramatic as they are difficult to assess. So how do we fix our fuel and energy problems? To answer that question—the first in a quarterly series called Fix This—*Bloomberg Businessweek* Chairman Norman Pearlstine gathered BP Capital Management's T. Boone Pickens; Bob Shapard, chairman and chief executive officer of Oncor Electric Delivery and chairman of GridWise Alliance; Carol Browner, former director of the White House Office of Energy and Climate Change Policy for President Obama and EPA administrator for President Clinton; Jigar Shah, CEO of the Carbon War Room; and Thomas Kuhn, president of Edison Electric Institute.

### [Thinking about an oil-free world](#)

If you're skeptical that the end of the oil age is not only in sight, but is affecting you right now, read Jeff Rubin's book *Why Your World is About to Get a Whole Lot Smaller*. Rubin is a Toronto economist who presents so much hard evidence that crude oil supplies are dwindling that I can't imagine how anyone could reasonably argue against it. The question isn't if oil will become too scarce and expensive to be practical, but rather how much foresight and ingenuity we'll need to redesign the Canadian economy so it isn't linked to the price of the gasoline, diesel and jet fuel that most every home, job, meal and industrial process depends on.

Although your home may or may not use crude oil products directly, the end of the oil age will still redefine what constitutes an efficient home. These revisions will also change what people feel are desirable residential locations, alter the mechanics of how you get around, and shrink the size of the physical community you connect with. And all of these issues boil down to more or less the same thing. How little energy can you use and still stay happy?

### [Canada's Economy Shrank 0.3% in May Posting the Largest Drop in Two Years](#)

Canada's gross domestic product fell in May by the most in two years due to temporary disruptions in the mining and oil and gas sector, government data showed.

### [Energy subsidies cripple Pakistan economy, says study](#)

Energy subsidies in Pakistan are contributing to “severe supply problems” according to a report from the country’s Petroleum Institute.

Power consumption has grown by 80% over the last 15 years, but a failure to keep up with demand has led to crippling electricity shortfalls.

Pakistan spent nearly \$3.5 billion subsidising the power sector in the fiscal year ending in June, and the artificially low price of natural gas is creating a problem with supplies. Subsidies contribute to inflated demand and gas now accounts for over 45% of Pakistan’s domestic energy needs.

### [Analysis: Iraq Faces Challenges in Growing Oil Production](#)

Iraq's large oil-production potential could allow it to compete for leadership with Saudi Arabia in the coming decades, but a new energy study by Rice University's Baker Institute for Public Policy finds that in the near term, both Baghdad and Riyadh may have difficulty meeting rising demand for oil.

### [GULF PRODUCTS-Gasoline supported, fuel oil remains tight](#)

DUBAI/Khobar, SAUDI ARABIA (Reuters) - Gasoline premiums in the Middle East Gulf were supported this week, while traders expected fuel oil market to stay tight for at least another month on the back of weaker Iranian exports.

The Iranian volumes, which jumped to a record-high of 1.2 million tonnes for June arrivals and had averaged 550,000-600,000 per month up till this month, have fallen to less than 200,000 tonnes for August arrival, due to disruptions to its natural gas supplies.

### [Chesapeake adding acres in Utica shale](#)

(Reuters) - Chesapeake Energy Corp, the second-largest U.S. producer of natural gas, is continuing to buy acreage in the Utica Shale, a basin that the company expects to drive growth of oil and liquids-rich natural gas, the company's chief executive said on Friday.

"We're quite confident about the play," Chesapeake CEO Aubrey McClendon told analysts on the company's second-quarter earnings call.

### [BP remans Gulf platforms as Don threat termed over](#)

(Reuters) - BP Plc said Friday it was sending workers back to its Gulf of Mexico platforms because the threat of Tropical Storm Don had passed for facilities that far east of the system.

But a spokesman could not say when production would restart on the shut Atlantis platform.

### [China approves Sinopec's plan to build Saudi refinery](#)

BEIJING (Reuters) - Chinese government has approved state-run Sinopec Group's plan to build a 400,000 barrel-per-day Yanbu refinery in Saudi Arabia, three months after Sinopec and state-run Saudi Aramco struck an initial pact to build the \$10 billion plant in the world's top oil exporting country.

### [Life in Tripoli 'very, very volatile'](#)

With little fuel and a shortage of banknotes, life in the Libyan capital is getting harder despite Tripoli avoiding some of the heavy bombardment seen in other parts of the country, a senior UN official said.

### [Lukoil Crisis Won't Cause Fuel Supply Shortages at Bulgarian State-Owned Transport Companies](#)

Bulgarian Transport Minister Ivaylo Moskovski has assured that currently there is no indication of a fuel supply shortage for the Bulgarian State Railways BDZ, Sofia Airport and the major ports in the country.

The announcement comes on the heels of the anticipated closure of the Lukoil Neftochim refinery, the sole operational crude oil processing plant in Bulgaria, over its failure to comply with legal requirements and install measuring devices.

### [Crisis widens for Cyprus as cabinet quits over growing financial woes](#)

NICOSIA // The Cypriot cabinet resigned yesterday to try to damp down public fury over a fatal munitions blast that destroyed the island's largest power plant and compounded its economic woes, possibly forcing an EU bailout.

### [When you're a petrocrat, it's one day at a time](#)

As part of the tumult roiling the petro-producing world, we took the plunge last week and pondered who would succeed the aging president of one much-observed corner of the globe should he become incapacitated or die. That corner was Kazakhstan, and we found good reason to settle on oil tycoon Timur Kulibayev to succeed his father-in-law, long-time Soviet-era ruler Nursultan Nazarbayev. In short order, we have received a

form of validation in commentary by a court aide to Nazarbayev. In a pinch, the aide argued sensibly, Kulibayev would step in as a stabilizing force and "continue the president's strategic program."

### [Russian refinery runs hit post-Soviet high in June](#)

(Reuters) - Russian refiners processed more crude in June than any month since the fall of the Soviet Union, Energy Ministry data showed, in order to maximise gasoline output and close a supply gap that has led to shortages.

### [EOG's big gamble on shale oil](#)

Doerr's crew drilled to a depth of 9,100 feet, stopped, and then curved out laterally to target a 40-foot-wide layer of porous, oily rock sandwiched between two thick layers of shale. "Our goal was to drill horizontally 5,000 feet," Doerr recalls during a tour of the original drilling site. "But we only got out 1,800 because of all the oil and gas we encountered."

To Doerr's amazement, the Parshall well immediately produced 450 to 500 barrels a day, about five times more than his best-case scenario going in. "I called up Mark and said, 'Wow, I think we've found something here.'"

### [Brazil May Cut Ethanol Output Tax to Avoid Shortage, Folha Says](#)

Brazil may cut taxes on ethanol production or allow mills to delay tax payments to avoid a shortage of the fuel in the future, Folha de S.Paulo reported, without saying where it obtained the information.

### [Nobel Prize Winner Pursues Clean-Tech Leadership With Thinning Wallet](#)

There's something about Energy Secretary Steven Chu's laugh, something that may hint at what -- he hopes -- a scientist can achieve in the age of deficits.

It is a kind of self-effacing chuckle that doesn't condescend, though his credentials would back that. Nor is it wistful, even though the new Congress has assaulted his energy agenda and the climate science behind it.

Perhaps it reflects the magnitude of what he is trying to accomplish: the evolution of an aging energy infrastructure into one that can make the United States a leader in a vital global industry. In an interview with ClimateWire, he said he'll have to do it by using DOE's thinning wallet as a catalyst for the technology breakthroughs that only the private sector can pull off.

### [An Energy Crisis Solution That Proves Small Can Be Beautiful](#)

Chances are you've never heard of the arenga sugar palm tree. No, it's not the next untapped source of limitless, economically viable, scalable biofuel feedstock (for that, perhaps see the latest on recently discovered algae that thrive at the hot temperatures needed to most effectively breakdown and convert biomass into fuels). But, as *National Geographic* described last month, arenga does have some remarkable features that could provide an important, if small-scale, piece of the sustainable energy *and development* puzzle.

### [Richard Heinberg: Debt tantrum on a sinking ship](#)

The even bigger, and most important, context is that we are entering a new historic era. Oil prices are high due to the ongoing depletion of giant, easy-to-produce oilfields discovered back in the 1950s and '60s, and the substitution of expensive oil from deepwater drilling and tar sands. Other non-renewable resources are also becoming scarcer. On top of that, the climate is changing and weird weather is helping drive up food prices. Oh, and let's not forget, the oceans are dying. Altogether, it seems reasonable to conclude that economic growth—fueled during past decades by cheap energy and raw materials, but also made possible by a stable climate—is coming to an end.

### [Reinventing Collapse in the US](#)

With the American economy teetering, Dmitry Orlov sees similarities in another 'superpower collapse.' Is he just a doomsayer?

### [The commons as an antidote to relentless growth](#)

- Commons reduce money-induced growth because they make us more independent of money. The more we produce commons, the less we or the state has to pay for goods.
- Commons reduce population-induced growth because they are associated with a multiplicity of sufficiency strategies which create prosperity by sharing.
- Commons escape the growth compulsion, because all those things that are produced as commons, do not have to be made artificially scarce. And there is no incentive for artificial scarcity because commons are not produced as goods to be exchanged but they foster and maintain social relationships, satisfy needs and solve problems. Directly.

### [Life After Capitalism](#)

Like many sustainability activists, I strongly believe that with advanced planning and preparation, the demise of capitalism could be an extraordinarily positive change for most of humankind. I tend to agree with Richard Heinberg of the Post Carbon Institute (see TEOFWAWKIT: The End of the World as We Know It) that global resource



scarcity, aggravated by catastrophic climate change, will force the break-up of large nation-states into small self-governing regional units. As a strong proponent of participatory democracy, I maintain that it will be up to the inhabitants of each region to determine how they will govern themselves and provide for their basic needs. At the same time, I feel that some features of post-capitalist society can be predicted -- either because they are dictated by resource scarcity or because they are fundamental to true political and economic democracy:

### [John Michael Greer: Salvaging learning](#)

The realization most Americans are frantically trying to stave off just now is that nature has called our bluff. That limitless new supply of energy most of us were waiting for hasn't appeared, and there are good reasons, founded in the laws of physics, to think that it never will. In the meantime, our decision to double down has left us burdened with, among other things, a public school system and a collection of colleges and universities even more gargantuan and unaffordable than the ones we had before we doubled down, and a psychology of previous investment that all but guarantees that our society will keep on throwing good money after bad until there's nothing left to throw. Politicians and ordinary people alike have taken to insisting, along these lines, that the solution to joblessness is to send people to college to get job training, on the assumption that this will somehow make jobs appear for them. To call this magical thinking is an insult to honest sorcerers, but it's likely to be increasingly common in the years to come -- at least until the bottom drops out completely.

### [Rapid drift to urban areas across the Pacific](#)

Pacific island populations are becoming more urbanised, according to a report from a Pacific based policy think-tank.

..."A combination of high unemployment, climate change and a looming energy crisis means radical new thinking is needed about how to best evolve our cities and towns for the future."

### [Germany blames Chinese land buys for Africa drought](#)

Germany's Africa policy coordinator on Thursday blamed China's practice of buying up land in the Horn of Africa for contributing to the devastating drought ravaging the region.

Guenter Nooke told the daily Frankfurter Rundschau it was clear that "this catastrophe is also man-made".

"In the case of Ethiopia there is a suspicion that the large-scale land purchases by foreign companies, or states such as China which want to carry out industrial agriculture there, are very attractive for a small (African) elite," he said.

"It would be of more use to the broader population if the government focused its efforts on building up its own farming system."

### [China rejects claims of Africa land buy-ups](#)

China rejected claims by a German official that it has been buying up land in the drought-ravaged Horn of Africa, saying the allegations are "completely unfounded" and have "ulterior motives".

### [China offers 14 mln USD emergency aid to drought-hit Horn of Africa](#)

BEIJING (Xinhua) -- China announced Friday that it will provide a total of 90 million yuan (14 million U.S. dollars) worth of emergency food assistance to countries in the Horn of Africa.

### [Crude Oil Falls, Heads for Weekly Decline, on U.S. Debt Ceiling Dispute](#)

Oil fell, headed for the first weekly decline in five, on concern a failure to reach a deal on raising the U.S. debt limit may cause the nation to default, threatening the economy of the world's biggest crude consumer.

Futures dropped as much as 0.8 percent after House Speaker John Boehner delayed a planned vote on debt-limit legislation as Senate leaders stood ready to kill the measure should it get to their chamber. Prices also declined before a report forecast to show the world's largest economy grew at the slowest pace in a year. U.S. crude stockpiles rose for the first time in eight weeks last week, Energy Department data showed July 27.

### [Analyzing the Global Oil Supply: 2012 Is the Year for Peak Oil](#)

Here is the problem. Current daily oil production is 88.3 million barrels per day and the second half of 2012 expected daily oil demand is 92 million barrels per day. Current production is a 3.7 million barrel per day shortfall from where we need to be in 2012. Where can the oil to make up this shortfall reasonably be expected to come from ? 3.7 million barrels per day is 40% of Saudi Arabia's current total oil production and they are currently banging up against the most oil they have ever produced on a daily basis. Does anyone really think they have another 3.7 million barrels of spare capacity ?

### [Peak Oil: When Saudi Spare Capacity Falls Short](#)

The last few nights have been restless, to say the least.

And the worst part is I know exactly why I keep up my insomniac pacing. A single thought has been rushing to the forefront of my sleepless psyche: *Let's hope it won't be us asking the Saudis for more oil.*



## [Peak Oil Passed](#)

As for peak oil, it's no longer a theory; it's an absolute. We've passed peak oil. When oil hit \$146/barrel (bbl.) back in 2008, that was based purely on speculation. It wasn't based on real demand; it was the flavor of the day. At \$90 and \$100/bbl., oil is pretty expensive. Even though the world is in a depression—and people are starting to recognize that it is a depression—we've got pretty expensive oil, and it's going to continue to go up.

## [Canada's new national Energy policy: export it](#)

Remember Pierre Trudeau's national energy policy (NEP) of the 1980s?

In his effort to protect Canadians from spiking world oil prices and build national energy sovereignty in the face of increasing Americanization of the oil patch, he almost broke up the country. The "west" and its mostly American oil industry would have nothing of it. The anti-Trudeau, anti-"east" vitriol, the bitter residue of which still remains, was unparalleled.

## [Oil still leaking at 2 platforms on NE China sea](#)

QINGDAO - Oil continues to leak at ConocoPhillips's two platforms in northeast Bohai Bay more than two weeks after Chinese authorities ordered a shutdown of their output, said China's oceanic watchdog on Friday.

## [India tries to pay for Iran oil via Turkey - minister](#)

(Reuters) - India is trying to make initial payments for oil to Iran through a Turkish bank, Oil Minister S. Jaipal Reddy said on Friday, after the Islamic Republic halted shipments for August over debts which now mount to some \$5 billion.

"We are trying to deliver the first tranches (of Iran oil payments) through Turkey," Reddy said.

## [Demand Response Helped Some Regions Conserve Electricity During Heat Wave](#)

As blistering heat bakes the United States this month, it has been megawatts and "negawatts" to the rescue.

Power generation plants of all sorts have been able to keep air conditioners running. But last Friday, under the assault of a record heat wave, they were helped by demand response programs that were activated to raise thermostat settings, lower lighting, shut down pumps and production lines and shave peak electricity consumption in other ways.

## [China's Regulators Tackle Energy-Guzzling Buildings](#)

SHANGHAI -- For Jin Liang, a typical Chinese who watches his utility bills carefully, each scorching hot summer day posed a dilemma: Should he switch on his air conditioner, or keep it off to cool the impact on his wallet?

But his dilemma faded away this year after Jin moved into a new apartment. It features magical materials that allow him to comfortably turn off the air conditioner and yet stop sweating.

## [China warns of tight power market](#)

China's power supplies will remain tight in some regions for the rest of the summer even though electricity shortages since the start of the season were less severe than anticipated, a government report showed on Friday.

China had forecast the worst summer power shortage in recent years for 2011 but so far actual shortfalls were smaller than expected due to favorable weather and other factors such as power price hikes.

## [Japanese, in Shortage, Willingly Ration Watts](#)

Already a leader in conservation, Japan consumes about half as much energy per capita as the United States, according to the United Nations Population Fund. But it has been pushed to even greater lengths since the nuclear disaster even as it tries to revive its economy. The accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant and the resulting backlash against nuclear power have left only 17 out of Japan's 54 reactors online as the nation steels itself for August, the hottest month of the year.

Preliminary figures indicate that regions under conservation mandates have been able to meet reduction targets and even exceed them, providing a possible model of conservation's potential when concerns about global warming are mounting. In the Tokyo area, the government is pushing to cut electricity use by 15 percent between 9 a.m. and 8 p.m. on weekdays to prevent blackouts — and on Thursday, for example, that target was met compared with last year.

## [Japan PM to speak on plan to reduce nuclear power](#)

Japan's centre-left Prime Minister Naoto Kan was expected Friday to outline a long-term plan to scale back nuclear power and boost renewable energy sources such as wind and solar.

### [Japan watchdog tried to plant views at nuclear forum-utility](#)

(Reuters) - A Japanese utility said on Friday the government's nuclear watchdog asked it to recruit local residents to attend a public forum and speak in favour of its planned use of plutonium-uranium mixed-oxide or MOX fuel at one of its reactors.

### [U.S. Regulator Says Fukushima Lessons Can Percolate](#)

It's official: the chairman of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission has been outvoted on his proposal that the panel decide within 90 days on the recommendations it received from its Fukushima task force.

### [Analysis: Pirates eye share of Gulf of Guinea riches](#)

(Reuters) - Pirate attacks on ships in the Gulf of Guinea are threatening one of the world's emerging trade hubs and are likely to intensify unless the region's weak naval and coastguard defences are beefed up soon.

Stretching from Guinea on Africa's northwestern tip down to Angola in the south, the Gulf spans a dozen countries and is a growing source of oil, cocoa and metals to the world's markets.

### [Egypt uprising: Islamists lead Tahrir Square rally](#)

Tens of thousands of people have packed Cairo's Tahrir Square, after the first call by Islamist leaders for nationwide demonstrations since President Hosni Mubarak was overthrown in February.

The demonstrators - dominated by Muslim Brotherhood supporters - are calling for an Islamic state and Sharia law.

### [Blast on Iran pipeline cuts gas flow to Turkey](#)

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) -- An explosion struck a major Iranian pipeline carrying gas to Turkey and cut the flow of gas on Friday, the semi-official Mehr news agency reported.

### [Libyan rebels say military chief killed](#)

BENGHAZI/NALUT, Libya (Reuters) - Libya's rebels said their military commander was shot dead in an incident that remained shrouded in mystery, pointing either to divisions within the movement trying to oust Muammar Gaddafi or to an assassination by Gaddafi loyalists.

The killing of Abdel Fattah Younes, who for years was in Gaddafi's inner circle before defecting to become the military chief in the rebel Transitional National Council (TNC), set back a movement that was at last beginning to acquire cohesion as international pressure on the Gaddafi regime intensifies.

### [Libya years away from oil recovery](#)

Libyan oil production will take years, not months, to return to full capacity once a political solution to the conflict is found, according to Barclays Capital.

“The reincorporation of Libyan oil into the world market increasingly seems a distant possibility” according to the study, which warns of a lasting political vacuum after the potential fall of the Gaddafi regime.

### [Total's profits fall 12% due to cut in Libyan output](#)

Profits at French oil giant Total have fallen 12% after the conflict in Libya disrupted its production in the north African country.

### [Rosneft first half net profit rises 34.2 pct to \\$6.8 bln](#)

MOSCOW (RIA Novosti) Russia's oil giant Rosneft's first half net profit grew 34.2 percent to \$6.8 billion to US GAAP, the company said on Friday.

Revenues for the first half increased by 43.7 percent year-on-year to \$43.397 billion, and operating profit rose 39.5 percent to \$9.09 billion .

### [Chevron 2Q Profit Rises 43%, Beating Estimates](#)

Chevron Corp (CVX), the second-largest U.S. oil company, reported a 43 percent jump in quarterly profit Friday, beating Wall Street forecasts as strong oil prices and fatter refinery margins offset a drop in oil output.

### [Mexico's Pemex posts 9.1 bln peso net profit in Q2](#)

MEXICO CITY (Reuters) - Mexico's state oil company Pemex posted a second-quarter net profit of 9.1 billion pesos (\$777 million), versus a loss in the same quarter last year, as revenues jumped 25 percent, the company said on Friday.

The profit was due to higher oil prices this year and compares with a 20.1 billion peso loss in the second quarter of 2010.

### [Galp Raises 2020 Production Target After 'Exceptional' Progress in Brazil](#)

Galp Energia SGPS SA (GALP), Portugal's biggest oil company, raised its 2020 output target in light of "exceptional" progress in Brazil and said "several parties" had shown an interest in buying shares in its Brazilian unit.

The company expects working interest production of more than 300,000 barrels of oil equivalent a day by the end of the decade, Lisbon-based Galp said today in a filing. That's up from a previous forecast of 200,000 barrels a day.

### [Exxon profit up 41 percent, misses Street](#)

HOUSTON (Reuters) - Exxon Mobil Corp reported a higher quarterly profit that missed Wall Street estimates as maintenance slowed its international refining and production, and its shares closed down 2 percent.

### [Should BP split?](#)

A COMPANY that rakes in profits of \$5.6 billion in three months might expect congratulations. But BP's second-quarter results, unveiled on July 26th, disappointed. Asset sales after last year's Gulf of Mexico disaster (see picture) have hit production. A botched attempt at an asset swap and arctic exploration deal with Russia's Rosneft has added to BP's woes. Some investors are calling for the firm to be split up. Does this make sense?

### [Infiniti's first hybrid offers high mileage, at a high price](#)

Dominique notes the growing emphasis on battery cars, plug-in hybrids and ordinary hybrids — collectively, the "electrification" of vehicles. So, he says, "developing the technologies, having them in our portfolio, is going to be an important part" of Infiniti's future.

A similar hybrid system will show up on other Infiniti models, probably when they are redesigned, as the M series was for 2011.

### [Obama fuel efficiency deal could leave loophole for Detroit](#)

The Obama administration is set to announce aggressive new fuel efficiency standards tomorrow, scoring a rare victory on the environmental front. But the details of the agreement may weaken the standards and allow automakers to delay action on improving the efficiency of America's fleet of vehicles.

### [The cars that didn't eat Paris](#)

It seems everything is peaking these days. You've heard of peak oil - the point at which our global oil extraction starts falling. There's also discussion of peak food, peak wood, peak phosphorous, peak water and peak rare earths.

Now here's a new one for you: peak cars.

### [California dreaming: LA imagines life without cars](#)

Los Angeles is famous for its addiction to cars -- whether cruising in their convertibles, or (more often) sitting in monster traffic jams on the freeway, the car is definitely king for Angelenos.

But a surprise public response to a "car-mageddon" warning this month has fueled questions over whether -- shock, horror -- LA motorists could wean themselves off of four wheels.

### [Boeing, Embraer back sugar jet-fuel study](#)

Brazilian aircraft maker Embraer and US rival Boeing said Tuesday they will co-finance research to determine the sustainability of using Brazilian sugarcane in jet fuel.

### [Oil Rush trailer shows off RTS-tower defense](#)

While politicians fret about the ramifications of peak oil, video games are here to show us that it could actually be pretty fun.

### [Pedaling Your Way to Environmental Nirvana](#)

Though still in their infancy, cardiovascular exercise machines that enable users to generate electricity are growing in popularity at gyms and sports clubs.

### [Greenpeace says coal-fired energy costs ailing Greece](#)

Cash-strapped Greece could save billions of euros in environmental and health costs by abandoning a reliance on coal-fired electricity production, Greenpeace activists said on Thursday.

### [1.5 million bats in Texas city left hungrier by drought](#)



The drought has killed off crops in Texas, and that in turn has killed off those delicious pests the Mexican free-tailed bats consider dinner.

That means they have to leave home earlier than usual each night to find nourishment — giving the locals in this bat-crazy city a precious few more minutes to watch the normally-nocturnal critters fly before the sun goes down.

### [The Permaculture Movement Grows From Underground](#)

Fourteen of us had assembled to learn permaculture, a simple system for designing sustainable human settlements, restoring soil, planting year-round food landscapes, conserving water, redirecting the waste stream, forming more companionable communities and, if everything went according to plan, turning the earth's looming resource crisis into a new age of happiness.

### [Ladner serves up food for thought](#)

What would a city approaching food self-sufficiency look like?

Peter Ladner's soon-to-be released book *The Urban Food Revolution* offers tantalizing glimpses of urban environments that successfully integrate commercial enterprise, low-impact living spaces and agricultural productivity. Balcony gardens, urban market gardens, rooftop beehives, vertical greenhouses and aquaponics, and acres of lawn converted to high-value herb and vegetable production are all being employed with success somewhere. Why not everywhere?

### [Interview with \*The Wealth of Nature\* Author John Michael Greer](#)

#### **1. What inspired you to write *The Wealth of Nature*?**

As a writer and blogger in the field of peak oil, I realized some time ago that mainstream economists didn't get the implications of resource depletion. Really, that's an understatement; mainstream economists very often insist, sometimes with quite some heat, that resource depletion is irrelevant and that a healthy economy can always, by definition, come up with a replacement for any resource that runs short; their arguments have been rehashed endlessly by critics of peak oil. Mind you, these are the same mainstream economists who insisted in 1999 that tech stocks were undervalued, and who claimed in 2006 that skyrocketing housing prices weren't a sign of a speculative bubble. This doesn't exactly lend credibility to their claims about natural resources.

### [Over the Horizon: Viewing the Future Through the Lens of Past](#)

How might international affairs have affected my daughters' lives had they been born in 1909, instead of in 2009? What key events would have shaped their outlooks and expectations? More importantly, how can using the vantage point of 1909 to contextualize contemporary events help us think about the century ahead?

### [With Sewage in Hudson, a Big Blow to Business](#)

"I came to New York in 1985, and I remember what people used to say," said Randall Henriksen, the owner of New York Kayak Company, at Pier 40. "To have raw sewage in the water now, that can put people off for some time to come. Who knows what the long-term consequences will be?"

### [Republicans Seek Big Cuts in Environmental Rules](#)

With the nation's attention diverted by the drama over the debt ceiling, Republicans in the House of Representatives are loading up an appropriations bill with 39 ways — and counting — to significantly curtail environmental regulation.

### [African Hydro, Cooking Stoves May Benefit From New Carbon Rules](#)

Wind turbines, hydro-electric dams and efficient cooking stoves in Africa and other countries may attract up to \$1 billion in investment, according to ClimateCare after the United Nations agreed on new carbon market rules that may grant such projects more emissions credits.

### [U.S. and Europe Battle Over Carbon Fees for Airlines](#)

Sharply divergent climate change policies on opposite sides of the Atlantic are setting off political fireworks as European environmental regulators prepare to extend their reach across the ocean. Starting Jan. 1, the European Union will require all carriers entering or leaving its airports to either reduce their emissions or pay a charge — whether the airline is United, Air France or Lufthansa.

### [Slow Stirrings Among Conservatives on Adaptation -- Just Don't Mention Climate Change](#)

Tony Allender believes in climate change, but his Texan bosses are more skeptical. That disconnection might have made his job to help prepare a coastal city for rising seas and more flooding a losing effort.

So the city planner adopted a motto being used increasingly in conservative places where global warming and its orbiting impacts, such as more powerful storms, are hitched to zany liberal politics: Don't mention it.

### [Russia may lose 30% of permafrost by 2050](#)

MOSCOW (AFP) - Russia's vast permafrost areas may shrink by a third by the middle of the century due to global warming, endangering infrastructure in the Arctic zone, an emergencies ministry official said Friday.

"In the next 25 to 30 years, the area of permafrost in Russia may shrink by 10-18 percent," the head of the ministry's disaster monitoring department Andrei Bolov told the RIA Novosti news agency.

"By the middle of the century, it can shrink by 15-30 percent, and the boundary of the permafrost may shift to the north-east by 150-200 kilometres," he said.

### [It's Stupid to Talk About Demography When Countries Suffer from Inadequate Demand](#)

The key feature of the "demography stupid" story is that the ratio of the elderly to the working population is too high. This means that workers do not have much left in wages for themselves after the taxes or capital earnings of the elderly are pulled out of the economy.

Of course this is 180 degrees at odd with the problem the U.S. and European economies face. If the elderly suddenly went on a huge buying binge it would create millions of jobs for younger workers. In the current economic situation the young would be better off if the elderly either had more money or there were more elderly spending money.

### [Literacy and the Population Problem](#)

Compared with illiterate young women, educated ones desire smaller families and generally manage to achieve that goal. The researchers are not saying that better access to family planning and contraception are unimportant — merely that these need to go hand-in-hand with improved education.

The paper offered the most convincing calculation I have seen of just how much the population curve could be bent by a more intensive global attack on the problem. If schools could be built and children educated at a rapid clip in all fast-growing countries, the global population in 2050 would hit 8.8 billion, the demographers projected.



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