

THE DUNN COUNTY NEWS

Climate change contrarians dishonor co-op principles

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Dunn Energy customers recently received the Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association "News". The Cooperative Network and Dave Hoopman, their director of Regulatory Affairs, oppose the EPA's modest steps to reduce power plant emissions. Basically burning limitless cheap coal today trumps tomorrow's environmental collapse.

Coal giants are determined to maintain vast profits and their "grip on the grid" of America's electric cooperatives. They donate to lobbyists and lawmakers who stall renewable energy initiatives and promote coal-burning power plants. Last year, members of Congress received \$34 million to do nothing about climate change.

Fossil fuel companies cynically fund misinformation about global warming. These conspiracies are exposed in an Internet article, located by searching for "Meet The Climate Denial Machine". The Koch-funded Cato Institute, and their pet climate contrarian and Fox News favorite, Patrick Michaels, are listed.

Hoopman quotes Michaels and raises inaccurate cherry-picked data on atmospheric warming "to slow things down" -- "things" being the EPA's Clean Power Plan. Then, seeking to bamboozle us, he suggests friction between the electric grid and renewables, when the reverse is true. Thanks to the grid we can use clean energy now, through Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) from companies like Arcadia Power, or by buying panels in Dunn Energy's proposed solar facility.

CO2 emissions continue to increase. We are all complicit, all turning up the Earth's thermostat. In the light of the collective awakening needed to deal with this crisis, the peddlers of misinformation do us all harm and dishonor the cooperative principles.

We need to regulate and tax carbon emissions, but because many lawmakers are subject to the "pressures" of lobbyists we have inaction. Hopefully they will listen on Sept 24 when Pope Francis, a world leader willing to speak the truth about climate change, addresses Congress.