



Irony seen in Obama's setting for 'climate' rant

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June 21, 2016

During a recent family vacation that included stops at Carlsbad Caverns National Park in New Mexico and Yosemite National Park in California, the president urged more people to visit national parks – not to mention take notice of the surroundings he argues are impacted by climate change.

"Here in Yosemite, meadows are drying out, bird ranges are shifting farther northward, alpine mammals like pikas are being forced further upslope to escape higher temperatures," said Obama.

Paul C. "Chip" Knappenberger, assistant director for the Center for the Study of Science at the Cato Institute, takes issue with the president's messaging.

"In this particular case, the president is confusing natural variability with anthropogenic climate change," Knappenberger explains. "It's true that climate change, in the generic sense, is causing some of the shifts that he's seen. But it's not climate change in the sense that he's saying that it's anthropogenic global warming that's causing all these things to happen."

Knappenberger adds that, at a local level like that of a national park, weather events and climate fluctuations drive all these things.

"They're a natural part of the adaptive strategy of these species that he's talking about," he says. "So ... it's a bit of a mischaracterization."

Still, President Obama remains firm, telling people to make no mistake in viewing climate change as merely a threat. "It's already a reality," the president said.

OneNewsNow asked Knappenberger about those remarks.

"I find it somewhat ironic that the president is out standing in front of these beautiful natural environments and then railing against 'climate change' when it is climate and climate change that has basically changed and sculpted these environments that he's using as a backdrop to make these remarks in the first place," he explains.

"Is anthropogenic global warming happening? To a very small degree compared to the larger forces at play," he continues. "And I think it's a large stretch to sort of be standing there and making a point that human-caused changes to the climate are a significant driving force or even one that we need to be concerned about."