

## OPINIONS

# Conversations with climate alarmists

BY ALAN VOETSCH

Climate activists are really going overboard to try to frighten us into toeing the line and doing as they say. In the spring *Applegater* they were telling us that we had until 2030 before we reached the “tipping point.” By mid-July, alarmists in the media were saying there were only 18 months before we reached that same tipping point. By July 29, that number was down to 14 months. Shortly afterward I figured out why we were being subjected to these ever-closer catastrophic scenarios. Care to guess? Yep, upcoming climate conferences and the 2020 elections. There was a climate summit at the United Nations in September, and the big Conference of the Parties will be held in Santiago, Chile, in December. The job of climate alarmists is to frighten us and the politicians we elect into bad environmental and tax policies.

In recent email conversations with a local climate activist-alarmist, I was startled by some comments that were made. That conversation prompted me to promise myself to be more active and share information with other residents in the Applegate Valley because I think that these organized alarmists are scary. Let's look deeper. That way we can see what we're all up against.

**Comment No. 1.** “You are confusing this with the real science behind anthropogenic global warming (AGW). To disprove AGW one must disprove the science.”

Answer: That “science” is actually computer modeling, *not science*. Weather forecasting models the weather, and those models are updated hourly because weather cannot be predicted accurately for longer than that. Earth is not a closed system, and weather constantly changes.

These folks apparently do not understand what science really is. Science is a method of inquiry. The method says an assertion is valid and will be universally accepted only if it can be reproduced by others and thereby independently verified. When adhered to, science can transcend politics. However, when politics takes precedence over content, you end up with trash and a political agenda.

By the way, when it is *your* argument that is making the claim of a crisis that demands immediate action, it is not up

to me to disprove anything. It is up to *you* to show us how you'll justify spending trillions of our dollars, destroying our economy in the process while raising the cost of practically every product we use. So alarmists, once and for all prove your claims of a coming doomsday just around the corner. And release the data you use globally so anyone and everyone can verify them.

**Comment No. 2.** “The astounding complexity of the fraud you imply sounds similar to arguments that ‘we didn't land on the moon.’ You truly can't understand the immense quantity of sound science behind AGW and have your current opinion while being a rational, analytical person.”

Answer: Again, it's modeling and guesswork, *not science*. Pay attention, fellow Applegaters, because if you disagree with these people, you cannot be a rational or analytical person. On the contrary, when we are told “the debate is over, the science is settled,” it is our duty to investigate much more closely because science is never settled. Over 50 years ago, when I first became interested in astronomy, the science said that Jupiter had 12 moons and Saturn had five. Current count has Jupiter with 79 moons and Saturn with 62. And the constant idiotic claims of climate catastrophe that made zero sense are the reason I started searching for some sanity in the first place.

**Comment No. 3.** “You clearly have invested so much effort into your belief that it is clouding your perception of the realities of AGW. The really sad and concerning part, to me, is that you will persuade some people to take your erroneous view, further damaging the earth for future generations.”

Answer: Wow, it'll be my fault when we are all doomed because I dared to question the climate consensus. It irritates alarmists when anyone disagrees with them. Even if you're a professional in their field, they'll do anything to marginalize and silence you because you're dangerous. The real danger is accepting that they know anything other than their political ideology.

Book suggestion. *Green Tyranny* by Rupert Darwell.

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# Bear Grub Timber Sale: BLM's newest logging proposal in the Applegate

BY LUKE RUEDIGER

In spring 2017 the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) proposed the Middle Applegate Timber Sale. The planning area for the timber sale included the entire Wellington Wildlands, a beautiful roadless area between Ruch and Humbug Creek. The Applegate community quickly rallied around the Wellington Wildlands and asked BLM to withdraw the area from potential timber harvest. Applegate Neighborhood Network (ANN) organized the production of a spectacular film about the area, by Greeley Wells and Ed Keller, called *Saving Wellington*. This film highlights the Wellington Wildlands and the threat to the area posed by the Middle Applegate Timber Sale. We organized public film showings and a petition to Save Wellington Wildlands.

We spoke with our state senators, met with BLM, and organized with supporters across southwest Oregon.

In response to significant public opposition, BLM canceled the Middle Applegate Timber Sale and withdrew large portions of the Wellington Wildlands from their new planning area! Although we consider this a victory, BLM immediately proposed the Bear Grub Timber Sale, incorporating portions of the Middle Applegate Timber Sale and forests to the east in the Little Applegate Watershed. The project's planning area extends from the mountains above Talent, Oregon, in the Bear Creek Valley, to the foothills west of Ruch.

The initial Scoping Map, published by BLM, shows proposed units in the China Gulch portions of the Wellington Wildlands; on the East Applegate Ridge Trail (ART), the Sterling Mine Ditch Trail, and the Jack-Ash Trail; on Woodrat Mountain; up Sterling Creek from Buncom to the headwaters on Griffin Lane; around Anderson Butte; on Bald Mountain; and into the headwaters of Coleman Creek, Anderson Creek, Yank Gulch, and Wagner Creek.

Although BLM has identified commercial timber production as the overriding objective of the project, they have also identified potential “treatment” areas that could be implemented as commercial timber sale units and/or fuel-reduction units. The Scoping Notice also identifies the potential for road renovation and new road construction to occur.

ANN is concerned by the proposal to log sensitive habitats, unroaded areas, and important recreational areas. Trails like the East ART, the Sterling Mine Ditch Trail, and the Jack-Ash Trail are extremely popular and have become important to both local communities and the regional economy. Impacts to the biological, scenic, and recreational value of these trails (and proposed extensions of these trails) are shortsighted and economically counterproductive and will degrade both the quality of life for local residents and the experience of tourists visiting the region.

The watersheds of the Applegate River provide many valuable assets to



surrounding communities and economies without requiring or even benefiting from intensive timber production. The Applegate Valley economy is based on tourism, agriculture, recreation, wineries, real estate values, and quality of life. These provide much bigger economic benefits to our community than commercial timber harvest. They are also often in direct conflict with intensive timber production.

We at ANN believe that the arid forests surrounding Ruch and the Little Applegate Valley cannot sustain the level of harvest envisioned by BLM without removing large, ecologically valuable trees and dramatically reducing canopy cover. The loss of large fire-resistant trees and the reduction in canopy cover in the Applegate Watershed often lead to the development of dense shrubby reproduction, stand desiccation, and an increase in understory fuel loading. Previous logging treatments have also increased overstory mortality by making stands more susceptible to drought stress, bark beetle outbreaks, and windthrow. Fuel loading and fire risks will continue to increase until canopy conditions can recover and again suppress understory growth. These issues are particularly troublesome in the Bear Grub planning area, where residential properties in the Ruch, Forest Creek, Bishop Creek, and Sterling Creek areas adjoin proposed treatment areas.

We are concerned by BLM's proposal to implement commercial logging treatments in both the Wellington Wildlands (along the proposed Applegate Ridge Trail) and in old-growth forests (on Bald Mountain at the headwaters of the Little Applegate River and along the proposed route of the Jack-Ash Trail).

Although we see significant potential for restoration in the Bear Grub planning area, we also have many concerns about the proposed project, its location, and its potential impacts. For more information on the Bear Grub Timber Sale, visit the Applegate Neighborhood Network Blog at [applegateneighborhood.network/blog](http://applegateneighborhood.network/blog).

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