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"The imagination of nature is far, far greater than the imagination of man."
- Richard Feynman

Hot Picks

Tim Flannery, author of The Weather Makers to speak in Boulder.

6/5/2006. 7:30 PM. \$5. First United Methodist Church. 1421 Spruce St.

He is reported to be an excellent speaker and will address the challenges we face and what we can do about those challenges.

<http://www.theweathermakers.com/>

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In addition to providing information on moving to a sustainable energy future, SE News serves as the unofficial newsletter for BREEE – Boulder Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency Working Group.

<http://www.boulderenergy.org>

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From Boulder & Colorado:

Short Takes: Boulder & Colorado

New Golden city facility to be green and have large PV array:

http://www.denverpost.com/thornton/ci_3807301

Xcel saves ratepayers \$9.75 million from wind in 2005.

<http://www.cleanpowernow.org/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=359&mode=thread&order=0&thold=0>

Xcel writes rebate checks:

http://www.dailycamera.com/bdc/county_news/article/0,1713,BDC_2423_4725203,00.html

Xcel proposes rate hikes for WindSource.

http://www.dailycamera.com/bdc/county_news/article/0,1713,BDC_2423_4722651,00.html

Xcel Accountability Project. *We need your help now in developing an unprecedented campaign to hold Xcel accountable to consumers.*

<http://www.exposexcel.com>

Mercury emissions soar in Colorado – up 69.5% in one year. Is this a change in estimation, policy, or what? *Xcel Energy, the state's largest energy company, largely drove the upward spike. Its five coal-power plants, which include the Comanche plant in Pueblo, reported an aggregate 541 pounds of emissions in 2004 – as compared to just 51 the year before.*

<http://www.csindy.com/csindy/2006-04-20/news2.html>

Daily Camera: Boulder Emissions Plan Aggressive But Achievable. *Boulder's proposed plan to cut greenhouse-gas emissions nearly 24 percent by 2012 found solid support at a public meeting Monday, despite an estimated price tag of more than \$1 million a year.*

... It will require about \$8.2 million in city expenditures over six years and an estimated \$36 million in private-sector outlays to cut the city's carbon dioxide emissions such that they are 7 percent below 1990 levels. Boulder's greenhouse-gas output has grown 16 percent since 1990. ... Backers view the money as an investment: It would save consumers and businesses an estimated \$63 million in energy... "If their analysis is correct and we can achieve Kyoto for roughly 1 percent of electricity cost per year, it's brilliant," said Thomas Doerr, of Boulder. "I would ask if we shouldn't go further."

http://www.dailycamera.com/bdc/cool_gear/article/0,1713,BDC_2522_4684372,00.html

Longmont looks at small hydroelectric facility at Button Rock Dam.

<http://www.longmontfyi.com/Local-Story.asp?ID=6813>

Pumping up the Grid. RM News on Xcel's plans for new generation to cover peak loads.

http://www.rockymountainnews.com/drmn/energy/article/0,2777,DRMN_23914_4660202,00.html

Empire REA (Cortez area) improves rules for net metering.

http://www.cortezjournal.com/asp-bin/article_generation.asp?article_type=news&article_path=/news/06/news060523_2.htm

Colorado Springs Utility increases funding for solar rebates in 2006 by 50%. (Note that their website had not been updated as of 6/1)

http://www.csu.org/residential/rebates/renew_rebate/index.html

From Eric Johnson, Charlie Stevens, Morey Wolfson, Ross Vincent, Rick Gilliam, and others.

Tri-State Confirms WRA/SWEEP Report Prediction of 50% Cost Increases?

As noted in last month's SE News, according to a report by Western Resource Advocates and Southwest Energy Efficiency Project (WRA/SWEEP), Tri-State's plans for 1800 MW of new coal will raise most of the Rural Electric Associations in Colorado's wholesale rates "in excess of 3 cents per kWh - more than a 50% increase over today's wholesale prices."

<http://westernresourceadvocates.org/energy/pdf/WRA-SWEEP%20Tri-State%20Resource%20Plan%20Analysis.pdf>

In the May 10th Montrose Daily Press Tri-State spokesman Jim Van Someren seems to be confirming the WRA/SWEEP analysis. Quoting from the paper:

"... rates will increase in the next few years but not as drastically as predicted by the report. Tri-State estimates that wholesale utility costs to its members will increase 7 to 12 percent annually for the next three to five years."

It is not clear what Jim means by "not as drastically". Doing the very simple math to compound his "7 to 12 percent annually for 3 to 5 years" shows a rate increase from a low of 23% to a high of 76% - WRA/SWEEP's estimate of 50% is dead in the middle of that range.

http://www.montrosepress.com/articles/2006/05/10/local_news/2.txt

Mac McLennan from Tri-State, and Rick Gilliam, a senior policy analyst with Western Resource Advocates and co-author of the report are interviewed about Tri-State's plans on Colorado Matters. (Scroll down to Tuesday, May 30).

http://www.cpr.org/co_matters/

From Jake Meffley and Morey Wolfson.

Xcel Releases Demand Side Management Market Potential Study

From SWEEP's website (Southwest Energy Efficiency Project):

An in-depth market potential study conducted for Xcel Energy by a team of demand-side management (DSM) experts reveals that through the implementation of cost-effective DSM programs the utility could save up to 1,623 GWh/yr of electricity consumption and cut peak power demand by up to 462 MW by 2013. Achieving this level of savings would result in \$710 million in net economic benefits for consumers and businesses in Colorado. For comparison, current DSM programming to which Xcel is committed will save 800 GWh/yr and reduce peak power demand 320 MW by 2013.

Full report and appendices:

http://swenergy.org/news/Xcel_DSM_Potential_Study.pdf

http://swenergy.org/news/Xcel_DSM_Potential_Study_Appendices.pdf

Also... SWEEP has an excellent summary of Colorado Utility energy efficiency rebate programs:

<http://swenergy.org/programs/colorado/utility.htm>

From Howard Geller.

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From Elsewhere:

Short Takes

2008 (due late 2007) Prius to be a plug-in?

http://www.greencarcongress.com/2006/04/toyota_ratchets.html

Altair Technologies Lithium Ion car. Road tests by year end. 200+ mile range on a charge. 6 to 8 minutes charging time.

http://www.technologyreview.com/read_article.aspx?id=16624&ch=biztech

A123 Systems announces Lithium Ion hybrid car battery pack which ... *could make hybrid vehicles cheaper and more convenient, while maintaining or improving performance. It could be appearing in vehicles within three years... The pack weighs about as much as a small laptop computer, yet fits into a case smaller than a carton of cigarettes. Ten of them would replace the 45-kilogram battery in the Prius, ... if one failed, the consumer could continue to drive the car using the remaining batteries, then replace the faulty one as easily as changing the battery on a rechargeable tool.*

http://www.technologyreview.com/read_article.aspx?ch=biztech&sc=&id=16894&pg=2

Bio-diesel from algae from sewage.

<http://www.renewableenergyaccess.com/rea/news/story?id=44928>

A staggering 182 million people in sub-Saharan Africa alone could die of disease directly attributable to climate change by the end of the century. A new report on The Climate of Poverty: Facts Fears and Hope from the non-profit group Christian Aid.

<http://www.christian-aid.org.uk/indepth/605caweek/index.htm>

Germany sets tradeable biofuels quotas for petroleum fuels. ... *plan would compel German oil refineries to blend two percent biofuel content in petrol until 2009, and 4.4 percent biodiesel content in conventional diesel.*

<http://www.planetark.com/dailynewsstory.cfm/newsid/36216/story.htm>

ADM building 85 million gallon biodiesel plant in North Dakota. Some of the extensive incentives for biodiesel facilities passed by ND last year are listed in the link.

<http://www.expansionmanagement.com/smo/articleviewer/default.asp?cmd=articledetail&articleid=17371&st=5>

PhD thesis: *It turns out that a host of social and technical factors, rather than only technical issues, prevent the use of DG/renewable technologies. These socio-technical impediments include things like utility preferences, business practices, and consumer attitudes."*

<http://www.vtnews.vt.edu/story.php?relyear=2006&itemno=245>

Renewable energy as hot topic in Governor's race in Nevada.

<http://www.renewableenergyaccess.com/rea/news/story?id=44817>

Washington Post: Home Insurers Leaving Some Coastal Areas. *Alarmed at the sharply rising cost of hurricanes and other disasters, home insurers are pulling back from some U. S. coastal markets and warning of gathering financial storm clouds over how the United States pays for the damage of catastrophe.*

<http://www.nwanews.com/adg/National/153409/>

A number of interesting reports are here (scroll down a bit under the “New” heading):

<http://rael.berkeley.edu/papers.html>

Including “Towards Energy Independence in 2025” on transportation, hybrids, plug-in hybrids, and ethanol.

<http://rael.berkeley.edu/ei2025-report.pdf>

Sterling Planet is pioneering the U.S. market for energy efficiency credits, otherwise known as White Tags or EECs, which represent 1 MWh (megawatt hour) of electricity savings... Three states have adopted legislation requiring energy efficiency credits as part of a mandated portfolio standard. Connecticut will be the first state to implement such a standard in 2007, with Nevada and Pennsylvania next in line. Energy efficiency credits are currently better recognized in Europe, where the market originated in United Kingdom, France and Italy.

<http://www.cleandedge.com/story.php?nID=4080>

Amory Lovins: Who Needs More Coal? *The fix is easy. First, state utility commissions must decouple utilities' profits from how much energy they sell...*

http://www.tompaine.com/articles/2006/02/10/who_needs_more_coal.php

NOAA finds April, 2006 the warmest April in the US since record-keeping began in 1895.

<http://www.noaanews.noaa.gov/stories2006/s2632.htm>

Bamboo biomass fired 130 MW power plant in Florida. Needs 15,000 acres. Will gasify the bamboo.

http://www.orlandosentinel.com/news/local/state/orl-cleanpower0706may07_0.6684968.story?coll=orl-news-headlines-state

Trouble in world carbon trading market. But note that these issues only sent trading down to US \$11 per metric ton from a mid-April high of US \$37 per ton.

<http://www.climateark.org/articles/reader.asp?linkid=56361>

Algae for remediation of coal fired power plant's waste gasses and up to 50% removal of CO2. Spent algae then used to make bio-diesel.

<http://columbusdispatch.com/business-story.php?story=dispatch/2006/02/28/20060228-E1-03.html>

Study: Tidal power in Maine at 4.2 to 6.5 cents per kWh.

<http://www.renewableenergyaccess.com/rea/news/story?id=44931>

Climate change rejectionist TV ads from the Competitive Enterprise Institute. *The ad, which despite appearances is not an SNL parody, helpfully reminds us that carbon dioxide is “essential to life” because “we breath it out.”*

<http://thinkprogress.org/2006/05/18/new-ads-funded-by-big-oil-portray-global-warming-science-as-smear-campaign-against-carbon-dioxide/>

Toronto, others, using deep water from lakes and oceans for cooling buildings.
http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2004/09/0910_040910_deeplake.html

Charlie Rose interviews New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman on Tom's new book The World is Flat – A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century and other topics. Very interesting interview and worth the hour it takes to watch.
http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=3654901030398257198&q=tvshow%3ACharlie_Rose

USA Today: Corporate America Warms to Fight Against Global Warming.
http://www.usatoday.com/weather/climate/2006-05-31-business-globalwarming_x.htm

From Charlie Stevens, Albert Melcher, Mike Bowman, and others.

Emergence Energy – A Company to Light the Darkness?

In the emerging economic world: cow-dung + micro-loans --> stirling engine --> a continuous 1 kW electricity --> light = a company and strategy to banish rural darkness?

During the test in Bangladesh, Kamen's Stirling machines created three entrepreneurs in each village: one to run the machine and sell the electricity, one to collect dung from local farmers and sell it to the first entrepreneur, and a third to lease out light bulbs (and presumably, in the future, other appliances) to the villagers.

Emergence Energy is being founded by *Iqbal Quadir, the founder of Grameen Phone, the largest cell phone company in Bangladesh.* Grameen Phone used micro-loans to fund purchase of cell phones by local villagers. *"We have 200,000 rural entrepreneurs who are selling telephone services in their communities," notes Quadir. "The vision is to replicate that with electricity."*

http://money.cnn.com/2006/02/16/technology/business2_futureboy0216/index.htm

Sweden: Aggressive Push to Sustainable Energy

Sweden ... aims to phase out nuclear power and end dependency on fossil fuels, putting the country in the vanguard of green energy policy.

...

"The aim is to break dependence on fossil fuels by 2020. By then, no home will need oil for heating. By then, no motorist will be obliged to use petrol as the sole option available. By then, there will be better alternatives to oil."

<http://www.commondreams.org/headlines06/0421-01.htm>

(This is the end of SE News)

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