

Global Warming Debate Heats Up



by Pamela J. Whitted
NSSGA Vice President for Government Affairs

The climate in Washington, D.C., has changed considerably in the last decade, and I am not referring to the weather. I am referring to the perception that “global climate change” or “global warming” is an increasing problem that America must address.

Am I the only one who remembers in the mid-1970s hearing warnings that we were entering a new Ice Age? No matter. In Washington, perception is reality, and a top priority of the Democratic Senate and House leadership is addressing global warming. As a result, NSSGA and its coalition partners are reviewing proposed legislation for potential impacts on the transportation construction industries.

A brief review of recent history may be helpful. In 1992, the U.S. ratified the United Nations Framework Conven-

tion on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which called on industrialized countries to take the lead in reducing the six primary greenhouse gases to 1990 levels by the year 2000. For more than a decade, voluntary reductions and regulatory actions have been proposed or implemented in the U.S., including monitoring power plant carbon dioxide emissions, improved appliance efficiency and incentives for developing renewable energy sources.

In 1997, the Kyoto Treaty committed industrialized nations to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, principally carbon dioxide, by around 5.2 percent below their 1990 levels over the next decade.

In the same year, the Senate voted 95-0 that any treaty approved would have to apply to all countries with-

out exception and not harm the U.S. economy.

President George W. Bush rejected the Kyoto agreement in 2001 (as had his father before him), saying that he would not commit the U.S. to a treaty with unrealistic timeframes, that would put the U.S. at a competitive disadvantage, was largely unenforceable, and called for legally binding commitments by developed countries to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. He also rejected the concept of mandatory emissions reductions. Since that time, the administration has focused U.S. climate change policy on voluntary initiatives to reduce the growth in greenhouse gas emissions. Meanwhile, in 2005, Congress passed a non-binding sense-of-the-Senate resolution on climate change declaring that a mandatory, market-based



Serious trucks.™



Tony C. Mayes
Summersville, West Virginia
Western Star owner

90 or 1

**NO PAYMENT FOR 90 DAYS OR
REDUCED 1ST YEAR PAYMENTS.**

Limited-time offer for trucks purchased from dealer inventory.
See a Western Star® dealer for details. Don't let someone else beat you
to the truck of your dreams.



To find a Western Star dealer: Call 1.866.850.STAR, or visit serioustrucks.com.

*Specifications are subject to change without notice. Western Star Trucks is registered to ISO 9001. ©2007, Freightliner LLC. All rights reserved.
Western Star Trucks is a member of the Freightliner Group. Freightliner LLC is a DaimlerChrysler Company.*

program to slow, stop and reverse the growth of greenhouse gases should be enacted at a rate and in a manner that “will not significantly harm the United States’ economy” and “will encourage comparable action” by other nations.

Switching gears, the Bush administration in June announced U.S. support for an effort to develop a new post-2012 Framework on Climate Change by the end of 2008. The plan recognizes it is essential that a new framework include both major and developing economies that generate the majority of greenhouse gas emissions and consume the most energy, and that climate change must be addressed in a way to enhance energy security and promote economic growth. President Bush said that the U.S. will convene the major emitters and energy consumers to advance and complete the new framework by the end of 2008.

A motivating factor for the administration may be the increased focus of both chambers of Congress on climate change. Hearings have been held in committees of the House and Senate

and a plethora of bills have been introduced to advance programs designed to reduce greenhouse gases. They generally follow one of three directions. The first is to improve monitoring of greenhouse gas emissions to provide a basis for research and development and for analyzing any potential future reduction plans. The second is to enact a market-oriented greenhouse gas reduction program along the lines of the trading provisions of the current acid rain reduction program that was established by the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990. The third is to enact energy and related programs that would have the added effect of reducing greenhouse gases.

Following two weeks of debate in June, Senate passed an energy bill that included provisions to increase the fuel economy standard for cars and light trucks from 25 miles per gallon to 35 miles per gallon by 2020, but eliminated language requiring a 4 percent annual increase of the standard from 2020 to 2030. The House Natural Resources Committee approved legislation that

attempts to address climate change through carbon sequestration and other mitigation measures. The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee adopted legislation under its jurisdiction to help mitigate the effects of global climate change over Republican objections that the bill was both a waste of time on an issue outside the panel’s jurisdiction and that it is part of a Democratic leadership agenda which will be turned solidly partisan when the bill is combined with the recommendations of other committees. Senate appropriators attached a provision to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) fiscal year 2008 appropriations bill that would require the agency to prepare a greenhouse gas emissions registry rule.

What does this mean for the aggregates industry? To respond to this question, NSSGA is forming a cross-divisional task force under the Government Affairs Committee to review the many proposals and develop a policy position and action plan. The Transportation Construction Coalition, of which

Barry K. Wendt Memorial Commitment Award



NSSGA is seeking nominations by Dec. 3 for the **Barry K. Wendt Memorial Commitment Award**, which is presented annually to an individual who exemplifies commitment to family, community and the aggregates industry. The award was established by Cedarapids, Inc., in memory of Barry K. Wendt, a longtime active association member who devoted his energy to advancing industry causes and is remembered for his dedication, hard work and personal integrity. The Wendt Memorial Commitment Award will be presented at NSSGA’s Annual Convention in Las Vegas, March 10-13, 2008. Applications are available at www.nssga.org or by contacting Catherine Whalen at cwhalen@nssga.org. Please complete and return the nomination form no later than December 3rd with attention to NSSGA Wendt Commitment Award. For more details, please contact Ms. Whalen (703-526-1081).

NSSGA
Attention Selection Committee
Wendt Commitment Award
1605 King St.
Alexandria, VA 22314

BIG in AGGREGATES

Grasan custom built, tracked primary horizontal impactor plant with Hazemag 1515 APPH crushes up to 700 tph of up to 32" cube shot limestone. Fully automatic hydraulic cylinder system for smoother operation and more uniform products.



Grasan high capacity, custom designed finishing plant (under construction) includes all structures, primary and secondary screens, two cone crushers, transfer conveyors.



Grasan specializes in designing and building complete crushing, screening, conveying, stacking and feed/storage equipment and systems for big aggregates operations (and yes, smaller ones, too). Grasan engineers will design equipment and systems *for* you or *with* you to meet your exact needs—including entire quarry plants or additions and upgrades to existing operations. Grasan can create flow charts, specify equipment, itemize costs, and spell out options to show costs versus benefits.

440 South Illinois Avenue • Mansfield, OH 44907-1809
419-526-4440 • Fax 419-524-2176
grasan@grasan.com
www.grasan.com



NSSGA is a member, also is developing a white paper on climate change.

A look at some of the data from the EPA and the Federal Highway Administration shows substantial progress toward emission reductions in a growing economy. According to both agencies, despite substantial gains in population, employment, gross domestic product (GDP), number of drivers, number of vehicles and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) since 1970, the nation's air quality has improved. Not only are greenhouse gas emissions from motor vehicles decreasing, emissions from the equipment used to construct roads and bridges are declining as well. Carbon dioxide emissions from fossil fuel combustion in construction vehicles only represented 0.86 percent of total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions in 2004. According to the Energy Information Agency, U.S. emissions of carbon dioxide generated by combustion of fossil fuels declined from 5,955 million metric tons in 2005 to 5,877 million metric tons in 2006. Construction equipment manufacturers continue to

improve their products to run more cleanly and more fuel efficiently. Further, many engine manufacturers have approved biodiesel, which ultimately results in a reduction in atmospheric carbon.

One of the leading causes of greenhouse gases is not transportation itself, but congestion. As a result of failure to increase capacity to keep up with new demands, congestion levels grew continuously between 1990 and 2001. Studies have shown that the percentage of congested freeway mileage has grown from 43 percent to 55 percent since 1990, and the average annual hours of delay experienced by commuters has increased from 18 hours per year to 26 hours. At the same time, an estimated 5.7 billion gallons of fuel are wasted because of congestion in 75 of the largest cities. Clearly our nation's surface transportation system is not keeping up with the growth in system usage, resulting in increased congestion.

As the climate change debate continues, some of the issues that need to be considered include the need for in-

creased investment to make the needed system improvements to reduce congestion throughout the transportation network; focusing "non-attainment" designations on prioritizing congestion elimination and not putting federal transportation funding at risk; ensuring future proposals take into consideration the progress made by transportation in achieving cleaner air; direct all or some of the revenue raised, should a "carbon tax" or other such user fee be imposed into the Highway Trust Fund (HTF) where it can be used to maintain and improve the condition of the roads and highway system and reduce congestion; and, since use of alternative vehicle fuels will result in less revenue into the HTF, consider a mechanism by which the HTF would be compensated for lost funds.

The global climate debate began years ago and promises to continue well into the future. What has changed is that the issue has moved to a front burner globally and nationally. In other words, I think you could say "the global warming debate is heating up." ■



Kruse Controls Inc.
Your Material Handling Automation Experts!
**Aggregate
Sand & Gravel
Cement
Dredging
Coal**
www.krusecontrols.com
(800) 810-8966

BREAK YOUR BIGGEST AND TOUGHEST ROCK...GUARANTEED!

TRY THE:

- ★ HIGHEST PRODUCTIVITY
- ★ QUIETEST
- ★ LOW MAINTENANCE
- ★ FASTEST
- ★ SAFEST
- ★ LOWEST COST



ROCK BREAKER AVAILABLE!!!

SURESTRIKE



SURESTRIKE INTERNATIONAL, INC.

P.O. Box 358 • Luck, WI 54853

www.surestrike.biz • e-mail: info@surestrike.biz

Call us today Toll Free: 866-472-8844