

*[This opinion piece by Nena Benavidez appeared in the Las Cruces Sun-News on 14 February 2021. Bob Endlich attempted to respond online to the Sun-News web site but was forced to abandon his attempt, because the algorithms processing his response created a series of problems that resulted in a jumbled mess. Consequently, he has decided to respond to this article here. Bob's response is printed below Nena Benavidez' letter. Ed.]*

OPINION

## **The time to act on climate change is now**

[Benavidez' letter](#)

Nena Benavidez

The science is crystal clear. We have fewer than 10 years to radically change our course or face the great consequences of our ongoing ecological destruction spanning from our extractive industries.

According to the 2018 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the world's best scientists said we need to drastically move toward decarbonizing our energy economy if we want a habitable planet for our future generations.

By delaying any action on climate change and its immediate threat to our lives, we are working against our own futures.

The climate crisis is real and it is impacting the lives of everyday New Mexicans in real ways. Our communities have witnessed bigger wildfires, severe water droughts and weaker snow packs, all of which are threatening our way of life by depleting our water sources. In fact, according to a report published by the Union of Concerned Scientists, New Mexico's major water sources have seen a decrease of up to 37 percent, compared to the total average throughout the 20th century.

In many ways our communities feel cornered because they understand the need to address the climate crisis but are perpetually told our communities will perish unless we continue to bow down to extractive industries. It is time to take the reins of our future —we the people working and living in the belly of the beast; we who put our lives on the line to extract our natural resources; and we who have been historically abused by corporations.

Without a doubt we are at a turning point, not only in the history of New Mexico, but in terms of determining the prospect of human existence. We must act swiftly and boldly, before it is too late. And we can't continue to destroy our children's homelands and futures, only for the accumulation of wealth of a few out-of-state CEOs who could care less about our communities.

But there is good news on the horizon. This is because New Mexico has an opportunity to be a role model to the rest of the country in how to act on climate while making sure these decisions are informed by hardworking New Mexicans. The opportunity is called House Bill 9—NM Climate Solutions Act.

HB9 arose from the need for a 'Just Transition' to a clean and healthy environment, with a thriving economy that respects our history and tradition of hard work, and one led by us — frontline communities. It is time for us to be first in line for training and access to the high-quality jobs of the future in emission and pollution reduction, and clean energy.

The Climate Solutions Act is one-of-a-kind in the nation. This bill will put us, workers who for generations have sacrificed our land and health for extractive industries, at the front of leading NM's economic diversification while also addressing the root causes of the climate crisis.

For far too long, we have not been included in the decision-making of NM's energy future. It is time we change that. We must commit to working for the bold, new solutions our communities deserve.

If New Mexico wants to live up to its proclaimed leadership on climate, it is time to show the nation that a healthy and clean environment does not contradict a diverse and sustainable economy. Now is the time to support and pass the Climate Solutions Act.

Nena Benavidez comes from a long tradition of miners and lives in Silver City. She is a community organizer with CAFé Acción.

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*[This is Bob Endlich's response. Ed.]*

Sad to say, Nena Benavidez has fallen for the stories of the climate catastrophe crowd. Sadder yet, she does not have the ability to look up the facts of climate and climate history but parrots the Democrat Party Line; "End of Times unless we act NOW! "

Nena Benavidez would have profited from attending my courses taught at NMSU-A and OLLI UTEP, "Weather, Climate and Climate Change—What the Data Tell Us." All is not lost, my course graphics are on-line at the Cruces Atmospheric Sciences Forum web site, <https://casf.me/>, on the Course Info Tab.

Benavidez' "fewer than ten years," forecast of climate doom will fail, and join these famous failed climate forecasts:

Beginning in 1923, and continuing until the Obama administration, the catastrophists forecast the end of the glaciers in Glacier Park, Montana by 2020; [even CNN](#) broadcast that the "glaciers disappearing" signs had to be replaced because the glaciers are still there.

On 3 December 1972, [Brown University's](#) geologists wrote to President Nixon warning of an oncoming ice age within a century with dramatically reduced food production, floods, snowstorms and killing frosts.

On 4 March 1977, President Jimmy Carter said that the world would run out of oil by the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Thanks to fracking, we now have over 100 to maybe 300 years of proven reserves, an amount seen to be increasing, because fracking and directional drilling

enable us to extract from the source rock, not accidents of geology such as anticlinal folds and salt dome-induced traps.

### **From Global Cooling to Global Warming:**

On 30 June 1989 UN Climate Expert Noel Brown warned “entire nations” could be wiped off the face of the Earth if global warming was not halted by 2000. This untruth is often repeated by local alarmist Peter Goodman.

On 29 June 2017, UN Climate Expert Christina Figures said, as quoted in the Daily Mail, “Four Years to save the earth: 2020 is the deadline to avoid climate catastrophe.”

### **Arctic Ice Disappearance and Droughts:**

On 20 Jun 2008 National Geographic News reported that the North Pole would be ice-free the first time in history, according to David Barber of the University of Manitoba. On 24 Jun 2008, AP Writer Seth Borenstein quoted NASA’s James Hansen that summer Arctic Ice would disappear “within 5-10 years.” On 23 March 2013, the Sierra Club’s Paul Beckwith predicted that Arctic Sea Ice would “vanish” in 2013. In 2009, Nobel Laureate Al Gore said that summer Arctic ice would disappear by 2014. On 21 August 2016, in The Guardian’s Robin McKie reported summer Arctic Ice would disappear by 2017 or at the latest, by 2018.

Every one of these dire predictions failed! Arctic Summer Ice has not gone below 4 million square kilometers according to the [MASIE data](#) published by the National Snow Ice Data Center, and the average is north of 11 million square kilometers.

Benavidez says, “the science is crystal clear.” That is blatantly not true, she is quoting only one point of view, the catastrophists. Not only is she quoting only climate alarmists and political figures, but she also does not have the wisdom to look up the numbers for herself.

One thing that Benavidez and her climate alarmist friends will never mention is the notion of climate cycles. She mentions current “severe water droughts,” but it has not occurred to use a plain-in-sight figure of merit which would show the error of her and others’ ways: the daily amount of water in Elephant Butte Reservoir, which has been written down every day since 21 March 1915, over [105 years’ of data](#).

If Benavidez had looked at the data, she would have found that the prominent 60-year cycle of rainfall and drought, the Pacific Decadal Oscillation, clearly explains the 1950s droughts, the 1980s-90s periods when Elephant Butte was full, and the low water which occurred in recent years. Further, she would have found that the low water which occurred on 6 August 1954 was the lowest on record, and recent low water marks are nowhere near as low as the 1950s. This means that Benavidez’ claims of more “severe water droughts” is plainly false.

Nearby [Jornada Range](#) shows over 100 years of increasing rainfall amounts. If you don’t want to look up rainfall records at the Western Regional Climate Center, I have a [post](#) which shows increasing rainfall amounts at NMSU, Los Lunas, Socorro, and Bosque Del Apache, in addition to Jornada Range, taken from WRCC.

## **Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) and Climate:**

Here are many inconvenient truths not mentioned by Benavidez: Over 175 years ago British Chemist William Henry told us that it is the temperature (of sea water) which controls whether dissolved gases go out of the water into the atmosphere, or from the atmosphere into the sea, Henry's Law. In other words, this is what **science** tells us!

So, **TEMPERATURE** controls atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations. The catastrophists say CO<sub>2</sub> controls temperature; this is plainly wrong. If we look geologic history of the last [400,000 years](#), we see five interglacial periods and five glacial periods. By far, the present interglacial has the most atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub>, but by far this is the coolest of the five interglacials, which verifies that CO<sub>2</sub> does not control temperatures.

The existence of the glacial and interglacial periods, having a periodicity of some 100,000 years, should enlighten some readers to another inconvenient truth: Climate never flat-lines, it is always changing. The wise reader might correctly deduce that we cannot control the weather or the climate, and that "climate legislation," is an oxymoron.

## **NM Climate Solutions Act:**

Stupidity is in plain sight. The NM Climate Solutions Act defines a number of greenhouse gases, but does not include the most massively important greenhouse gas of them all, water vapor. It could be said that water vapor controls the climate in New Mexico, because when water vapor increases from fewer than 10,000 parts per million in winter to over 40,000 parts per million in summer, it brings afternoon thunderstorms and most rain-producing showers to the state.

The whole idea of this legislation is to eliminate inexpensive and abundant energy sources for the "little people," and create more subsidies for unreliable wind and solar systems, subsidies paid by the poorest among us and which go into the pockets of the well-off. Who pays for those expensive full-page advertisements in the newspaper, and those flashy advertisements on TV and Radio? Certainly not the corporations building and selling those wind and solar systems. No, it is the little people who pay those subsidies.

Readers might question why I cite data, not politically-affiliated organizations, and ask why I use reference materials not used by Community Organizer Nena Benavidez.

In my youth, I spent 21 years as a Weather Officer in the Air Force. The experience of having to stand in front of dozens to hundreds of military members, some flying combat missions into harm's way, brings discipline, looking at data, that perhaps politicians and community organizers do not understand.