**Pragmatic Environmentalist of New York Summary Update 3/28/22 -4/10/22**

This is an update of my recent posts at Pragmatic Environmentalist of New York and elsewhere. If you do not want to be on this mailing list then let me know. Previous updates are also available.

Climate Act Scoping Plan Recommended Reading April 2, 2022

This post was also published at Natural Gas Now

This post summarizes the Denver Gazette superb perspective piece, Inconvenient Truths About Energy by Chris Wright in the context of the Climate Act. The article concludes:

> Today the price mechanism must destroy energy demand to bring it in line with short-term supply. This reduces the quality of living, especially for low-income families. The price mechanism will also incent new supply to the extent possible in the face of growing regulatory hurdles, infrastructure shortages, and capital starvation. A revaluation of all three of these factors is urgently needed. Is the overarching goal "energy transition" at all costs? Or is it humane policies that better human lives and expand opportunities for all? We need to replace the former mindset with the latter.

Pragmatic Principles and the Climate Act April 7, 2022

When I started the blog, I posted principles for pragmatic environmentalism that can be used to support a pragmatic approach to environmental issues. So far, I have included five of my principles and eight more created by others. This post described principles that are relevant to the Climate Act.

There are very few aspects of the Climate Act that represent a pragmatic approach to climate change mitigation. The rationale for the Climate Act frequently refers to extreme weather events that are more likely due to natural variability than climate change. The Draft Scoping Plan is littered with glittering generalities that carry conviction without supporting information or reason.

The economics in the Draft Scoping Plan are not pragmatic. The reliance on subsidized renewable resources will drive out competitive generators, lead to higher electric prices, and reduce economic growth. The economic damage from man-made 'climate change' in New York is illusory whereas damage from the Climate Act 'policies' to fight the said change is real. When the costs are finally publicized to the general public, we will see how much New Yorkers are willing to pay for achieving greenhouse gas emission reduction objectives and whether that willingness has limits.

Given that air pollution control efficiency increases the control cost per ton goes up exponentially and that 20% of efforts or inputs can yield 80% of the results or outputs, a more pragmatic approach would be to determine some lower level of "good enough" that will achieve emissions reductions without risking current standards of reliability and affordability. Ultimately, we can do almost anything we want, but we can't do everything so the enormous commitment to the Climate Act net-zero targets has to be considered relative to other pressing environmental and social problems.

Climate Act Scoping Plan Overview Presentation – Affordability and Reliability April 8, 2022
There are only four posts in the last two weeks primarily because I spent a lot of time preparing a power point presentation that summarized the Draft Climate Act Scoping Plan and potential issues with reliability and affordability. I tried to make the points in the presentation that most New Yorkers are unaware of the Climate Act. Not only that but fewer still understand the scope and magnitude of the changes required in order to meet the Climate Act targets and even fewer are aware of the costs, benefits, and threats to reliability inherent in the massive transition of our existing energy system to the net-zero targets of the Act. The presentation described those issues. Now that it is available. I can give it to anyone who wants a different overview than the one that the Climate Action Council provides.

Pragmatic Approach to Climate Change Policy April 10, 2022
I have been criticized for not offering alternatives to the concerns I have raised. This post highlights two articles that are consistent with what I think would constitute a pragmatic approach to climate change. In "A 'Plan B' for addressing climate change and the energy transition" Judith Curry describes problems with all net-zero energy transition programs. On March 10, 2022 *Doomberg* published "A Serious Proposal on US Energy" that described four energy priorities.

I believe that existing technology is just not ready to meet the ambitions for a zero-emissions economy embodied in the Climate Act. I concur with Dr. Curry that a "more pragmatic approach to dealing with climate change drops the timelines and emissions targets, in favor of accelerating energy innovation" and that "whether or not we manage to drastically curtail our carbon dioxide emissions in the coming decades, we need to reduce our vulnerability to extreme weather and climate events." My pragmatic approach would make deployment of wind and solar contingent upon the development of a viable dispatchable emissions-free resources (DEFR) technology. The development of a new and hopefully more viable nuclear generating technology such as small modular reactors should be a priority even if a DEFR solution is found. There are many advantages of natural gas that make it ideal for intermediate and peak load uses on the electrical grid; residential heating, cooking, hot-water, and backup electric generators; and as vehicle fuel. It is not perfect because there are some emissions but when considered on a fair reliability, affordability, and environmental impact basis it deserves to be part of a sustainable solution to minimize overall global impacts and improve human well-being.

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Citizens Guide to the Climate Act