



California Water and Infrastructure Report

For May 9, 2019

by Patrick Ruckert

Published weekly since July, 2014

An archive of all these weekly reports can be found at both links below:

<http://www.californiadroughtupdate.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/CaliforniaDroughtUpdate>

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“President Donald Trump this morning reiterated his concern about getting a U.S. infrastructure plan. He posted on Twitter, 'There is nothing easy about a USA Infrastructure Plan, especially when our great Country has spent an astounding 7 trillion dollars in the Middle East over the last 19 years, but I am looking hard at a bipartisan plan of 1 to 2 trillion dollars. Badly needed!'”

May 4 (EIRNS)-- Trump Pledges Help to Governors in Midwest Flooding; Says, 'Nothing Easy' About a U.S. Infrastructure Plan

A Note To Readers

Well, infrastructure is once again in the headlines and still there is no idea from the political leaders, including the President (as he admits) on how to fund even the \$2 trillion plan over ten years that he discussed with the Democrats a week ago.

So, after some interesting climate, weather, water items, and wildfire warnings, the bulk of this week's report will provide the readers with an array of material that points toward, not only how to fund-- not just \$2 trillion over ten years, but \$2 trillion per year for ten years-- infrastructure, and more. For it is only on that scale of funding that the immediate infrastructure deficit of \$4.5 trillion, as reported by the American Society of Civil Engineers, can be met, but the additional trillions required to not merely repair and build infrastructure, but to raise the product power of the economy and the labor force to a new platform; one that is at the level required by the 21st Century.

The final item this week is nuclear power, and has two articles: *“Germany's Nuclear Exit Was a Mistake,”* and *“The Reason Renewables Can't Power Modern Civilization Is Because They Were Never Meant To.”*

So, here we go.

Climate and Weather

We begin with the unusual weather pattern now being experienced in the West. Is it climate change? Maybe. But, just to remind everyone once again, the climate is always changing, and the planet will not end in 11 years no matter what AOL says.

Seattle hotter than Death Valley: Pacific Northwest to feel a summer preview as high temps outpace Desert Southwest

By Alex Sosnowski, AccuWeather senior meteorologist

May 9, 2019

A convoluted weather pattern will allow warmth and sunshine to build over the northwestern United States, while much of the Southwest turns cool and unsettled with showers through this weekend.

This time of the year, sunshine can be a big player in warm versus cool weather. However, [the jet stream](#) also plays a big role.

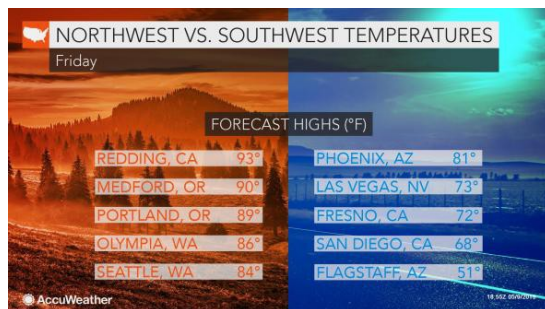
The jet stream will take on a snakelike appearance with a northeastward bulge across western Canada and a southwestward lunge over Southern California, Arizona and northwestern Mexico late this week.



Southwest to feel like the Northwest and vice versa

As a result of cloud cover and shower activity in the Southwest, and sunshine across the Northwest, parts of the Northwest are forecast to be warmer than some of the deserts at the same time.

During multiple days in the pattern, highs in some of the cities in the Southwest, such as Phoenix and downtown Los Angeles, may be significantly lower than that of Seattle, Washington, and Portland, Oregon.



On Friday, Seattle is likely to be warmer than Death Valley, California, with highs of 84 and 79 Fahrenheit respectively. It will be even cooler in Las Vegas where high temperatures will only be in the lower 70s.

Highs in parts of the Northwest will be 15 to 25 degrees above average, while highs in portions of the Southwest will be 5 to 15 degrees below average.

For example, the average high for Seattle during the middle of May is in the middle 60s, while the average high in Phoenix is in the middle 90s.

The pattern is likely to be a taste of what is to come this summer.

AccuWeather long-range meteorologists are anticipating [hot, dry weather to be the theme across the Northwest and somewhat cooler and wetter conditions in the Southwest this summer.](#)

Warmth to feel like midsummer in the Northwest

The setup across the North allows warmth to build aloft, which limits cloud cover. Strong May sunshine is then able to warm the lower levels of atmosphere in southwestern Canada and the northwestern U.S.

Adding to the warmth will be a light flow of air that descends from the mountains across the interior to lower elevations near the coast.

"Areas west of the Cascades and Coast Ranges can challenge record high temperatures into this weekend," [according to AccuWeather Meteorologist and western U.S. blogger Brian Thompson.](#)

In some cases, daily high temperature records that were set in the 1950s, 60s and 70s will be challenged in the Northwest.

"Temperatures in the Northwest will surge to levels more typical of midsummer with highs generally in the 80s and in some cases the lower 90s," according to AccuWeather Meteorologist Renee Duff.

California, of Course, Has Not a Clue on What To Do; So Does Everything That Will Not Work

And also does stupid and deceitful things that should just piss people off.

Californians Face Residential Water Rationing Next Year Following Record 2019 Snowpack

Indoor water use restrictions of 55 gallons per person, per day starting in 2020

By [Katy Grimes](#), May 8, 2019

<https://californiaglobe.com/fr/californians-face-residential-water-rationing-next-year-following-record-snowpack/>



San Luis Reservoir (Department of Water Resources)

Nearly one year ago, then-Gov. Jerry Brown signed a pair of bills creating permanent residential water rationing standards throughout the state of California. [Senate Bill 606](#) by Sen. Bob Hertzberg (D-Los Angeles), and [AB 1668](#) by Assemblywoman Laura Friedman (D-Glendale), impose a mandatory limit of 55 gallons per person per day on indoor water consumption beginning in 2020.

Specifically, AB 1668 established an indoor water use standard of 55 gallons per capita daily until January 1, 2025. Beginning January 1, 2025, until January 1, 2030, the indoor water use standard drops to 52.5 gallons per day, and beginning January 1, 2030, it drops again to 50 gallons per capita daily.

While South Africa, known as a “water-stressed country,” limits its citizens to a maximum of 50 gallons per day, California’s 2019 Sierra snowpack [was measured at 500 inches](#), and is on record at 188 percent of normal.

Rather than build much needed, already approved water infrastructure projects for less than the cost of implementing AB 1668 and SB 606, California’s political class prefers to impose controls through water scarcity.

Since year 2000, California voters have approved [eight water bonds](#) totaling more than \$30 billion, [according](#) the the Legislative Analyst’s Office, and approved the construction of two more dams.

Drought as Opportunity

On May 9, 2016, Gov. Jerry Brown signed an Executive Order to “make water conservation a way of life” in California, which opened the floodgates for future water rationing legislation.

Droughts are nature’s fault; they are naturally occurring. But water shortages are the fault of government officials.

The state of California hasn’t significantly invested in water storage since the 1970s when Jerry Brown was governor the first time around. “This is an era of limits and we all had better get used to it,” Brown said upon being elected governor in 1975, embracing the “small is beautiful” way of thinking. Since then, California’s population doubled, as have environmental demands.

More than fifty-percent of the state’s water resources are allowed to flow out the San Francisco Bay to the Pacific Ocean, because of the [San Joaquin River Settlement](#), which caused the loss of agricultural water supply by way of a lawsuit by the Natural Resources Defense Council. The lawsuit claimed that Friant Dam violated environmental laws ([explained in detail in this 2006 article](#)). The outcome allows for anywhere between 250,000 and 360,000 acre-feet of water to be specifically dedicated to fish habitat on the San Joaquin River – water that used to go to agriculture, explained Wayne Western Jr. at the [San Joaquin Valley Sun](#).

All told, 50 percent of California’s water goes toward environmental purposes. Of the rest of the water, only about 10 percent goes to “urban” uses for homes and businesses, and 40 percent is used by agriculture. A full 50 percent of the water is used for environmental purposes.

California’s most recent drought, 2011-2016, was billed by government and media as the driest period in the state’s recorded rainfall history. However, scientists who study the Western United States’ long-term climate patterns say otherwise: California has been dry for significantly longer periods — more than 200 years at a time, and long before the industrial revolution.

Hydropower bill would sabotage California’s clean energy mandate, critics say

By [Sammy Roth](#)

Apr 30, 2019 | 2:35 PM

https://www.latimes.com/business/la-fi-california-clean-renewable-energy-hydropower-20190430-story.html?fbclid=IwAR1kS5KW0CiStlzSGRD75o0DzS3Y7W_0LADVtURUxKXZxglJ8SLWwN3rKYI

The Don Pedro hydropower project, just west of Yosemite National Park, has been churning out carbon-free electricity for nearly a century. As the Tuolumne River flows from the Sierra Nevada to the Central Valley, it passes through Don Pedro Dam, spinning four turbine generators.

None of the electricity is counted toward California's push for more renewable energy on its power grid. A new bill advanced by state lawmakers last week would change that — and it's being opposed by environmental groups, who say it would undermine the state's landmark clean energy law by limiting the need to build solar farms and wind turbines.

Under Senate Bill 100, which was signed last year by then-Gov. Jerry Brown, California is required to get 100% of its electricity from climate-friendly sources by 2045. The law has become a [model for climate change action in other states](#), with lawmakers in New Mexico and Washington recently approving similar legislation.



The Don Pedro Reservoir in California's Central Valley. The hydroelectric power plant at the dam that impounds the lake generates carbon-free electricity for the Modesto and Turlock irrigation districts. (Modesto Bee)

But the details of how to get to 100% still need to be worked out. And now [SB 386](#), which was written by state Sen. Anna Caballero (D-Salinas), is reviving an old fight that's never been fully resolved.

Central Valley lawmakers have long argued that large hydropower projects should count toward California's renewable energy goals. From their perspective, excluding existing hydropower facilities forces utilities to buy additional solar and wind energy, raising energy costs for ratepayers in one of the poorest parts of the state.

Excluding hydropower makes no sense

By [Dan Walters](#) | May 9, 2019 | [Commentary, Dan Walters](#)

<https://calmatters.org/articles/commentary/excluding-hydropower-makes-no-sense/>

When California embarked on its quest to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases as a global model to stave off climate change, its first target was the state's electric power industry.

A series of ever-tightening decrees required utilities to shift from coal, natural gas and other carbon-based sources to a "renewable portfolio," eventually reaching 100% non-carbon sources by mid-century.

The acceptable alternatives were specified in law, dominated by windmills, solar panels and

geothermal wells. But for purely political reasons, the list omitted two power sources that are both free of greenhouse gases and renewable: large hydroelectric dams and nuclear plants.

The environmental groups that were agitating for an assault on greenhouse gases disliked nukes and hydro for other reasons and, in effect, would not accept their inclusion in a renewable portfolio.

Nuclear power is now out of the picture, since one of the state's two major nukes, San Onofre, is now shut down and the second, Diablo Canyon, is ticketed for closure.

However, California has dozens of dams, most of them along the western slope of the Sierra. They and out-of-state hydropower facilities generate about 15% of the state's power demand, and excluding them makes absolutely no sense.

That nonsensical policy is underscored by a quirk in the state's renewable-portfolio laws. Hydropower is legally excluded from the 2030 goal of a 60% reduction in carbon-based power, but it can be legally included in the 2045 goal of a 100% reduction.

Legislation now pending in the state Senate would restore, ever so slightly, some rationality to the renewable portfolio by allowing two irrigation districts in the San Joaquin Valley, Modesto ID and Turlock ID, to include power from their jointly owned Don Pedro Dam on the Tuolumne River.

[Senate Bill 386](#) is being carried by Sen. Anna Caballero, a Democrat from Salinas who was elected just last year and represents the region served by the two districts.

It would save their 200,000 power customers some money by reducing otherwise mandatory power purchases from solar and wind generators. Under current law, they would be required to purchase more power than they actually need to serve their customers.

Wildfires Will Come Once Again-- Lots of Warnings Being Made



Residences leveled by the wildfire line a neighborhood in Paradise, Calif., on Thursday, Nov. 15, 2018. (AP Photo/Noah Berger)

Firefighters Fear an Uncontrollable Fire Season This Year

By [Colleen Williams](#), [Mary Harris](#), [Carlos Chavez](#) and [Del Armijo](#)

May 3, 2019

<https://www.nbclosangeles.com/news/local/Firefighters-Fear-an-Uncontrollable-Fire-Season-This-Year-509413891.html>

"Uncontrollable."

That is the word now being used among fire chiefs in California to describe the kind of wildfires we could experience this year. Last year was a crushing year for California.

Wildfires in 2018 burned more than 2,800 square miles, destroyed 17,000 homes and killed 100 people. Despite record rainfall earlier this year, and recent cool weather, Southern California firefighters are bracing for another busy fire season.

NBC4 was invited to fly with the Orange County Fire Authority. Seated inside a water-dropping Huey helicopter, we are able to get a bird's-eye view, and a firefighter's perspective about on the landscape.

On a scale of one to 10, OCEA Fire Chief Brian Fennessy says last year was a 10 and this year, "We are expecting the same."

New Wildfires coming to Northern California, warns fire agency

National Interagency Fire Center warns that explosive grass growth has primed the Bay Area for burns

By [Adam Brinklow](#)

May 3, 2019

<https://sf.curbed.com/2019/5/3/18528696/fires-wildfire-bay-area-forecast-summer>

A new wave of [wildfires](#) will most likely hit Northern California in 2019, potentially worse than the devastating [2017](#) and [2018](#) firestorms, thanks in part to tremendous growth in native grasses that will dry out ("cure") in the coming months and create a trove of combustible materials throughout the summer.

That's the assessment of the [National Interagency Fire Center](#) (NIFC), a Boise-based organization that combines eight different anti-fire apparatuses.

The NIFC released its latest [National Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook](#) this week, predicting danger ahead for the Bay Area and all of Northern California.

In February, the Forest Service reported that it had identified an additional 18 million dead trees throughout the state over the past 18 months.

"Over 147 million trees have died across 9.7 million acres of federal, state, local and private lands in California since the drought began in 2010," [according to Cal Fire](#), noting that, although [the drought is over](#), inadequate rains from previous years can continue to affect tree populations.

"More than 25 million acres of California wildlands are classified as under very high or extreme fire threat, extending that risk over half the state," the report adds.

Hot, dry summer weather could bring yet another destructive wildfire season to California

[Cheri Carlson](#)

Ventura County Star

May 8, 2019

<https://www.vcstar.com/story/news/local/2019/05/08/weather-hot-dry-summer-bring-another-destructive-wildfire-season-california/1124209001/>

Last year was one of the deadliest and most destructive for wildfires in California and 2019 could be more of the same, authorities said Wednesday.

Representing local, state and federal agencies, they recounted the numbers. Statewide, more than 100 people were killed, 22,000 structures were destroyed and 1.8 million acres burned in 2018 wildfires.

"The devastation and destruction it causes used to be a few things ... every couple of years, now it's become yearly, year long and almost every year," said Dustin Gardner, deputy fire chief for the Ventura County Fire Department.

Forest fires accelerating snowmelt across western US

May 2, 2019

Source: Portland State University

Summary:

Forest fires are causing snow to melt earlier in the season, a trend occurring across the western US that may affect water supplies and trigger even more fires, according to a new study.

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/05/190502143355.htm>

Researchers found that more than 11 percent of all forests in the West are currently experiencing earlier snowmelt and snow disappearance as a result of fires.

The team used state-of-the-art laboratory measurements of snow samples, taken in DRI's Ultra-Trace Ice Core Analytical Laboratory in Reno, Nevada, as well as radiative transfer and geospatial modeling to evaluate the impacts of forest fires on snow for more than a decade following a fire. They found that not only did snow melt an average five days earlier after a fire than before all across the West, but the accelerated timing of the snowmelt continued for as many as 15 years.

"This fire effect on earlier snowmelt is widespread across the West and is persistent for at least a decade following fire," said Kelly Gleason, the lead author and an assistant professor of environmental science and management in PSU's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Gleason, who conducted the research as a postdoctoral fellow at the Desert Research Institute, and her team cite two reasons for the earlier snowmelt.

First, the shade provided by the tree canopy gets removed by a fire, allowing more sunlight to hit the snow. Secondly and more importantly, the soot -- also known as black carbon -- and the charred wood, bark and debris left behind from a fire darkens the snow and lowers its reflectivity. The result is like the difference between wearing a black t-shirt on a sunny day instead of a white one.

Lackluster rainy season spells trouble for fire outlook

Burn bans already in effect in parts of Oregon and Washington

By: [Natasha Stenbock](#)

[KOIN 6 News Staff](#)

May 08, 2019

<https://www.koin.com/weather/lackluster-rainy-season-spells-trouble-for-fire-outlook/1985555623>

PORTLAND, Ore. (KOIN) -- John Saltenberger, Fire Weather program manager with Northwest Interagency Coordination Center said there is an above normal significant wildland fire potential, meaning there's a greater than usual likelihood that significant wildland fires will occur.

Though the Pacific Northwest has seen major improvements in drought status, with only a small percentage of Oregon considered abnormally dry, we can't play catch up this late in the rainy season

when we're in a deficit of -6.83" (Oct.1 - Sep. 30) and behind Jan. 1 to date -4.08".

Now For the Subject of Infrastructure, Or, More Properly Termed, "A New Economic Platform of Productivity"

For those who may have forgotten, or perhaps did not get the message, President Trump has little support from the Republican establishment, whether that is in the Congress or from those he humiliated in the primary elections in 2016. The subject of infrastructure makes that clear, as he rejects the Republican (and the Wall Street Democrats) stupidity and ignorance of how this nation has always built the great projects that still today we depend upon for the nation to even function, despite 50 years of economic looting and insanity. The article later in this section below by David Ditch, "*Yes to infrastructure, but not if it means \$2 trillion in new debt,*" is an example of such stupidity.

The first item below makes that point-- the President rejects the so-called public-private partnerships approach.

The second item is a primer on how the American System has always worked when Presidents like Lincoln, Franklin Roosevelt and John Kennedy built what they did.

Infrastructure Agenda Points U.S. Towards the Belt and Road Initiative

May 2 (EIRNS)—The media mock it mercilessly, as they mock everything that is potentially good, but Tuesday's White House infrastructure meeting between President Donald Trump and a dozen Congressional Democrats strikes close to the root of the question of why Donald Trump is in the White House today, and also the question of the late Lyndon H. LaRouche's legacy, and the use to be made of LaRouche's ideas in the acute crisis of today.

The same group is to meet again in the White House in about three weeks, to hear President Trump's proposal for how to fund a (very inadequate) ten-year, \$2 trillion infrastructure package. President Trump said, "I'll lead on this. I'd like to do something. It may not be typically Republican." He dismissed the previous White House plan, based on public-private partnerships (PPPs), saying, "That bill was so stupid. It was a Gary (Cohn) bill," referring to his previous top economic advisor, from Goldman Sachs. PPP means "you get sued," said the President.

Your President Needs You Now—Not Three Weeks from Now

*This editorial appears in the [May 10, 2019 issue](#) of *Executive Intelligence Review*.*

https://larouchepub.com/eiw/public/unlisted/2019/eirv46n18-20190510/212ej87MKpOw/4618-your_president_needs_you_now_n.html?utm_source=sendingblue&utm_campaign=EIR_May_10&utm_medium=email

Excerpts:

May 2—They mock it mercilessly, as they mock everything that is potentially good—but Tuesday's White House infrastructure meeting between President Trump and a dozen Congressional Democrats strikes close to the root of the question of why Donald Trump is in the White House today, and also the question of the late Lyndon H. LaRouche's legacy, and the use to be made of LaRouche's ideas in the acute crisis of today.

As many of you probably know, the same group is to meet again in the White House in about three

weeks, to hear President Trump's proposal for how to fund a (very inadequate) ten-year, \$2 trillion infrastructure package. The President said, "I'll lead on this. I'd like to do something. It may not be typically Republican." He dismissed the previous White House plan, based on public-private partnerships (PPPs), saying, "That bill was so stupid. It was a Gary [Cohn] bill," referring to his previous top economic advisor, from Goldman Sachs. PPP means "you get sued," said the President.

Of course, our role is not to take bets around the water cooler on what the President may propose, but rather to go flat out immediately to encourage and support him to propose what is urgently needed.

Now the principle of credit was not quite at the very center of LaRouche's scientific discoveries, but it was never far from his thoughts. In a December 7, 2012 webcast, "No to the Green Policy: Revive Our Credit System," LaRouche began by insisting again that Glass-Steagall must be restored to protect the needed, honest part of the banking system. But he went on to specify:

However, . . . Glass-Steagall is indispensable, but it does not contain a cure. It contains a preventive of gambling, and it is necessary. But here's where the problem comes in: We're going to be operating, not on the basis of the present system. That is, if the United States is going to survive: if the U.S. economy is not going to disintegrate entirely, what's going to have to happen, relatively immediately, now, is the installation of a credit system as the basis of actually creating the growth of the U.S. economy. That is, an inflation-free form of growth, or hyperinflation-free form of growth, as the matter is now.

Later on he clarified:

Credit does not lie in letting money sit in a bank; it must do something. It must change its character; it must be more efficient; or it must be more enriching. It means technological progress; it means higher rates of energy-flux density, which is an essential part of this. People are more skilled; they do a job which is a more skilled job; they produce more value with the same amount of nominal labor. That's the system. We must generate growth. We must increase the productive power of labor. We must advance technology—absolutely. We must increase the energy-flux density flowing through the entire system.

So all the myths which Republicans and Democrats alike believe in, with a kind of religious fervor, or, shall we say, Satanic passion, are wrong. The generation of credit, as real credit, occurs only by the increase of the productive powers of labor, as measured in physical terms. This means physical terms in the sense that people doing the same thing do it more efficiently, or do it at a higher technology.

This is the principle of Federal credit, and that principle precedes and absolutely governs the forms of the institutions through which that Federal credit is issued, which are accurately summarized, for U.S. history, in LaRouche PAC's January 2019 [statement](#), "The Way Forward," which says:

Hamilton did it through the National Bank. Abraham Lincoln did it with his Greenback policy. Franklin Roosevelt did it through the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. So why not return to the best practice of both parties in finding a principled way to fund desperately needed infrastructure?

Upgrading U.S. infrastructure from the American Society of Civil Engineers' current rating of "D+" to its "A" level will indeed increase the productivity of all labor—but how do we achieve the qualitative revolutions which LaRouche indicates above? One great leap will involve bringing the huge Chinese high-speed rail industry to invest in this country to begin to revolutionize ground transport. Follow that up with magnetic-levitation rail, also now being pioneered by China.

But let's recall that LaRouche eventually rejected the term "infrastructure" entirely, in favor of the much more general concept of "economic platforms" forming the basis of an entire stage of human economic-scientific-cultural development, as for example the prehistoric maritime culture, which based itself on knowledge of the relationship between the long-cycle solar calendar and the entire celestial sphere, as Ben Deniston has reported.

This view forces us to unify (what should be) the short cycle of disaster relief from the Midwest flooding, with the middle-term cycle of disaster prevention, and the longer cycle of bringing the Belt and Road and its Eurasian Land-Bridge throughout the Western Hemisphere, from Alaska south to Tierra del Fuego, and equally West to East across the hemisphere.

The Road to the Stars

But at the same time, that concept introduces an even grander consideration—that of Solar system exploration and colonization. Now man can no longer be seen as strictly an earthbound species. We are in transition from a terrestrial “platform” to a Solar system platform. The race to land on the Moon within five years, and then to colonize the Moon and begin to explore Mars, has already forever changed our perspective even on Earth. And our apparently-earthly “infrastructure” plans undertaken today, will be penetrated and conditioned by the space Odyssey. All labor, of whatever form, will become more productive because of across-the-board scientific and technological breakthroughs spinning off from the space effort.

This was the Kennedy economic miracle: his de Gaulle-style indicative planning or industrial policy, and his infrastructure initiatives were all revolutionized by the Apollo Lunar program, as ours are being revolutionized now by our space program and the cooperative international crash space program of the immediate future.

BLS Shows Productive Jobs/Wages Stagnating; Infrastructure Needed

May 3, 2019 (EIRNS)--The April employment report from the Labor Department will be welcomed by the White House for the 263,000 new employment "headline" figure. Looking beyond seasonal adjustments and monthly fluctuations, the economy reportedly added 2.6 million jobs in the year ending April 2019: down somewhat from the fastest growth of 2.8 million/year reached in the Trump Presidency, but still high.

But manufacturing and mining employment have shown no reported growth for three months; construction (largely residential) was the only goods-producing category which grew in April, by 32,000 jobs. Recall that U.S. industrial production fell by 0.3% in the first quarter of the year. Consistent with the services-only growth, average weekly wages fell in April by 0.2%; they are up 3.0% in the year to April for all employees, and 2.8% for non-supervisory and production workers.

The smaller Household Survey simultaneously conducted by the Labor Department showed the labor force shrinking as more than 600,000 Americans dropped out of it, lowering the labor force participation rate by 0.2%, and therefore giving an extremely low "headline" unemployment rate of 3.6%. The "real" unemployment rate -- including marginal and discouraged workers and those forced to work part-time -- was 7.3%, unchanged. When one considers the 3.5 million work-eligible Americans who have not looked for a job for more than a year, the rate could be 9.2%, or more than 15 million people.

President Trump's meeting with Democrats on infrastructure legislation Tuesday, and his followup message today calling for bipartisan action to replace the "impeachment" farce, point toward the only source from which sustained growth in productive employment and productivity can now come. Even the \$2 trillion investment over 20 years which that meeting agreed to aim at, would make only a slow start on the productive transformation of the nation's economy and labor force which is needed.

White House Economic Advisors Delirious on U.S. 'Prosperity Boom,' as Localities Deal with Reality

May 4 (EIRNS)--Two White House postings yesterday, and TV appearances by Presidential economic advisors Larry Kudlow, Kevin Hassett, et al. reached new heights of delirium on the U.S. economy. Kudlow raved about how the U.S. is in a "prosperity boom," otherwise calling it "a prosperity cycle." A White House release provided a list of press snippets and headlines, on how the economy is "roaring," and "surging," and experiencing a "torrent of job openings."

The Council of Economic Advisors (CEA) issued a statement, "Unemployment Rate Falls to Lowest Level in Nearly 50 Years; U.S. Economy Adds 263,000 New Jobs in April." As is notable from even the official data, the drop in the numbers of people in the U.S. workforce enables the unemployment figures to look better; and few of the new jobs being created have to do with manufacturing, or productive work.

In truth, there are sites of new factory activity around the nation, but no depth nor pattern based on improving the productive capacity of the nation as a whole, building infrastructure, returning power supplies to nuclear, etc. Another announcement came this week. U.S. Steel will invest \$1.2 billion in its casting and rolling works in Braddock, just south of Pittsburgh, at its pre-existing J. Edgar Thompson Works. The volume of output by U.S. Steel--some 2.9 million tons of steel a year, is to remain the same. The technology for its rolling mill--supplying the auto industry and other users--will be higher.

A mobilization for upgrading the economy would change the whole picture. As it is, every state is experiencing more and more breakdowns in government function and physical conditions. They can't print money; they have no recourse.

Meantime, the entire national mode of independent family farming is in crisis, with the 2017-2019 disasters hitting on top of the last several years of farm financial losses and government impasse.

On April 29, a group of 135 farm organizations and rural banks that supply seasonal loans to farms and ranches, sent out a letter, calling on Congress and the President to supply needed relief. The leaders of the mobilization include the American Farm Bureau Federation, the National Milk Producers Federation, the American Soybean Association, the Independent Community Bankers of America and others. "On behalf of the thousands of impacted farm families, we cannot overstate how critical and time-sensitive it is to deliver on the commitments made last year to enact disaster relief for the farmers, ranchers and rural communities impacted by these catastrophic weather events. For many of the impacted regions, planting season is here and there is no more time for delays..."

Real U.S. Infrastructure Investment Demands Over \$10 Trillion

May 6 (EIRNS)—Schiller Institute President Helga Zepp-LaRouche, in her webcast May 5, stated that the \$2 trillion of new spending U.S. infrastructure discussed by President Donald Trump and Democratic leaders April 30 was very far short of the investment needed. The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) estimated a \$4.5 trillion need just for renovation; the former head of China Investment Corporation proposed \$8 trillion; and Zepp-LaRouche herself, based on comparison with China's building of new infrastructure, guessed the need could be as high as \$20 trillion. What would it be, if the demand were for recovery and renovation of the productivity of the economy, using the touchstone of Lyndon LaRouche's "Four Laws" to save the nation?

The well-known ASCE estimate of \$4.5 trillion is what the Society estimated to be necessary in added investment, not total investment. Public infrastructure spending currently is about \$200 billion/year, with only 30% of it being Federal spending. So the ASCE is really requiring over \$5 trillion in Federal investment. Moreover, the attrition rate of U.S. infrastructure expressed in financial accounting terms—annual depreciation—is \$100 billion/year, despite what is currently being spent, according to the National Bureau of Economic Research. That brings the demand to \$6 trillion. In addition, many, many

infrastructure facilities are so ancient that they have long stopped depreciating and adding to that attrition estimate—the Portal Bridge and Hudson Tunnels, for example. Yet they, all the more urgently, must be replaced, easily bringing that needed investment to \$8 trillion or more over a decade.

These costs, however, are all within the domain of renovation, replacement of basic economic infrastructure at the existing level of technology and integration—replacing elements, rather than systems of platforms. The White House's and other "top 50" or "top 25" projects are all extremely discrete—a replaced lock or bridge here, a new tube there. Costs are dominated by three sectors: The road and bridge system (ASCE: \$850 billion without ports or rail); the water management/water supply system (ASCE: \$400 billion); and the electrical power grids (ASCE: up to \$2 trillion).

What if far-sighted decisions are made: to introduce transportation systems with new technologies (maglev and high-speed rail for passengers, "slow" maglev and electric rail for freight); to integrate these with port connectivity and deepening; to introduce water management and supply infrastructure on new scales and with new technologies (the North American Water and Power Alliance, nuclear desalination, atmospheric ionization); and to bring on new electric power technologies (advanced third/fourth-generation fission and fusion power) and apply them broadly to industry?

In that case, a further cost must be borne by the nation which is not estimable but clearly involving several trillion dollars more, taking the investment over \$10 trillion. And not only this new investment is required. So are crash programs in the "infrastructural R&D" category to develop the new technologies, which will be led by the science driver of greatly expanded space exploration.

It is evident that only international development banks, based on new national credit institutions and agreements among the major economic powers, could eventually make this possible.

Civil Engineers Grade California's Infrastructure with a C-

May 7, 2019

by [Olivia DeGennaro](#)

<https://fox40.com/2019/05/07/civil-engineers-grade-californias-infrastructure-with-a-c/>

SACRAMENTO -- One doesn't have to look far to realize California's infrastructure is deteriorating.

"California has a number of challenges that we are struggling to keep up with. First of all, our infrastructure is aging and we also have a growing population," John Hogan, co-chair of the California Report Card Committee, told FOX40.

Failing power lines and crumbling roads are just some of the major issues highlighted in the American Society of Civil Engineers' 2019 report card.

It's [an analysis that comes out every six years](#), grading 17 different areas of infrastructure including waterways, aviation and schools.

This year, California received an average grade of C-, getting C's and D's in all 17 categories.

"Transit, rail, schools, parks, wastewater, I mean it goes on and on and on and, yes, a lot of those categories are items that people take for granted, don't think about," Hogan said.

The energy sector received the lowest grade in the report -- a D-.

Engineers say most power systems in the state are not well-equipped to handle future disasters.

"Aging equipment, inferior design and poor right-of-way vegetation management have caused infrastructure incidents, and in some cases, unfortunately, wildfires," committee co-chair Tony Akel said.

Engineers also pointed to other recent disasters, like the collapse of the Oroville Dam spillway to show why more maintenance is needed. They say most dams in the state are at least 50 years old.

"Dams provide 70 percent of California's water supply, 15 percent of the power, flood control and recreation," Akel said.

But the biggest hurdle in making these repairs is funding. Engineers say the state faces billions of dollars in the cost of maintenance that has been delayed.

That's why they met with lawmakers at the State Capitol, urging them to adopt policies to support infrastructure, and they say failing to act now could cost Californians six times as much in the future.

The US is terrible at building high-speed rail — here's why

May 7, 2019

<https://www.cnn.com/2019/05/07/why-is-there-no-high-speed-rail-in-the-us.html>

China has the world's fastest and largest high-speed rail network — more than 19,000 miles, the vast majority of which was built in the past decade.

Japan's bullet trains can reach nearly 200 miles per hour and date to the 1960s. They have moved more than 9 billion people without a single passenger casualty.

France began service of the high-speed TGV train in 1981 and the rest of Europe quickly followed.

But the U.S. has no true high-speed trains, aside from sections of Amtrak's Acela line in the Northeast Corridor. The Acela can reach 150 mph for only 34 miles of its 457-mile span. Its average speed between New York and Boston is about 65 mph.

California's high-speed rail system is under construction, but whether it will ever get completed as intended is [uncertain](#).

Watch the video to see why the U.S. continues to fail with high-speed trains, and some companies that are trying to fix that.

David Ditch: Yes to infrastructure, but not if it means \$2 trillion in new debt

By [David Ditch](#) | [Fox News](#)

May 4, 2019

<https://www.foxnews.com/opinion/ditch-infrastructure-debt>

[Washington](#) never seems to run out of big-spending promises. And when House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., huddled with President Trump on Tuesday, they came up with a doozy.

Schumer emerged from the meeting to announce that the president wants Congress to come up with a bill that would spend \$2 trillion on [infrastructure](#) — including roads, bridges, water systems and broadband.

It seems that this week's talks never got around to figuring out where to get the money to make good on this latest promise. But one thing we do know for sure is that the feds already spend too much on infrastructure projects that are not proper national priorities. State highways, metro transit systems, and local initiatives should be paid for by the people who use them and the taxpayers of the state and local jurisdictions who benefit from them.

Nuclear Power Was Never a Mistake; Shutting It Down Was and Is

Germany's Nuclear Exit Was a Mistake, Industrialist Tells {Bildzeitung}

May 8, 2019 (EIRNS)--In an interview published by Germany's largest mass-tabloid {Bildzeitung} today, Wolfgang Reitzle, top manager of Linde (industrial gases), attacks the "failed energy transition" from nuclear to solar and wind: "Here, under the impact of the tsunami-made reactor damage in the nuclear power plant Fukushima 9,000 km away, an epochal decision was taken at a finger's snap -- without any fact-based analysis and evaluation of the context. In Germany, Geiger counters were sold out, whereas in Japan's capital Tokyo, near Fukushima, no increase of radioactivity was monitored."

Today, on certain days electricity is imported from the neighboring countries, and Germany is surrounded by nuclear power plants with less safety than the German ones that have been turned off, Reitzle notes. The safety of the population has not been improved by any of this. And: "Nuclear power should stay a component of our energy policy, because it is the only one that can provide the base load, it is cheap, and free of CO2."

Reitzle also attacks the government for its economic policy orientation that discards the importance of the Mittelstand, which is predominantly generating the nation's economic wealth.

Taxation and bureaucracy are a burden and a threat to the Mittelstand, he says.

The Reason Renewables Can't Power Modern Civilization Is Because They Were Never Meant To

[Michael Shellenberger](#)

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<https://www.forbes.com/sites/michaelshellenberger/2019/05/06/the-reason-renewables-cant-power-modern-civilization-is-because-they-were-never-meant-to/#259c272bea2b>

With Germany as inspiration, the United Nations and World Bank poured billions into renewables like wind, solar, and hydro in developing nations like [Kenya](#).

But then, last year, Germany was forced to acknowledge that it had to delay its phase-out of coal, and would not meet its 2020 greenhouse gas reduction commitments. It announced plans to bulldoze an ancient church and forest in order to get at the coal underneath it.

After renewables investors and advocates, including Al Gore and Greenpeace, criticized Germany, journalists came to the country's defense. "Germany has fallen short of its emission targets in part because its targets were so ambitious," one of them [argued](#) last summer.

But Germany didn't just fall short of its climate targets. Its emissions have flat-lined since 2009.

Now comes a [major article](#) in the country's largest newsweekly magazine, Der Spiegel, titled, "A Botched Job in Germany" ("Murks in Germany"). The magazine's cover shows broken wind turbines and incomplete electrical transmission towers against a dark silhouette of Berlin.

"The Energiewende — the biggest political project since reunification — threatens to fail," [write](#) Der Spiegel's Frank Dohmen, Alexander Jung, Stefan Schultz, Gerald Traufetter in their a 5,700-word investigative story (the article can be read in [English here](#)).

Over the past five years alone, the Energiewende has cost Germany €32 billion (\$36 billion) annually, and opposition to renewables is growing in the German countryside.

“The politicians fear citizen resistance” Der Spiegel reports. “There is hardly a wind energy project that is not fought.”

Between 2000 and 2018, Germany grew renewables from 7% to 39% of its electricity. And as much of Germany's renewable electricity [comes](#) from biomass, which scientists [view](#) as polluting and environmentally degrading, as from solar.

Of the 7,700 new kilometers of transmission lines needed, only 8% has been built, while large-scale electricity storage remains inefficient and expensive. “A large part of the energy used is lost,” the reporters note of a much-hyped hydrogen gas project, “and the efficiency is below 40%... No viable business model can be developed from this.”

Meanwhile, the 20-year subsidies granted to wind, solar, and biogas since 2000 will start coming to an end next year. “The wind power boom is over,” Der Spiegel concludes.

All of which raises a question: if renewables can't cheaply power Germany, one of the richest and most technologically advanced countries in the world, how could a developing nation like Kenya ever expect them to allow it to “leapfrog” fossil fuels?

Entrepreneurs like Elon Musk proclaimed that a rich, high-energy civilization could be powered by cheap solar panels and electric cars.

Journalists reported breathlessly on the cost declines in batteries, imagining a tipping point at which conventional electricity utilities would be “disrupted.”

But no amount of marketing could change the poor physics of resource-intensive and land-intensive renewables. Solar farms take 450 times more land than nuclear plants, and wind farms take 700 times more land than natural gas wells, to produce the same amount of energy.

Efforts to export the Energiewende to developing nations may prove even more devastating.

The new wind farm in Kenya, inspired and financed by Germany and other well-meaning Western nations, is [located](#) on a major flight path of migratory birds. Scientists say it will kill hundreds of endangered eagles.

“It's one of the three worst sites for a wind farm that I've seen in Africa in terms of its potential to kill threatened birds,” a biologist [explained](#).

In response, the wind farm's developers have done what Europeans have long done in Africa, which is to hire the organizations, which ostensibly represent the doomed eagles and communities, to collaborate rather than fight the project.

Kenya won't be able to “leapfrog” fossil fuels with its wind farm. On the contrary, all of that unreliable wind energy is likely to increase the price of electricity and make Kenya's slow climb out of poverty even slower.

Germans, who will have spent \$580 billion on renewables by 2025, express great pride in the Energiewende. “It's our gift to the world,” a renewables advocate [told](#) The Times.

Many Germans will, like Der Spiegel, claim the renewables transition was merely “botched,” but it wasn't. The transition to renewables was doomed because modern industrial people, no matter how Romantic they are, do not want to return to pre-modern life.

The reason renewables can't power modern civilization is because they were never meant to. One interesting question is why anybody ever thought they could.