

## 2010 Legal and Public Notices

made by Kettering and seconded by Bodenstedt to approve the Workmans Comp proposal from M.T. & R.C. Smith Insurance. All present voted aye; motion carried.

**Action 15468C:** A motion was made by Bodenstedt and seconded by Epp to approve adding 3 volunteers for Search and Rescue to the list for Workmans Comp Insurance. All present voted aye; motion carried.

Cena Bernard, RiverFront Event Center, presented a request for a donation towards the downtown Christmas lights. No action was taken.

**Website:** The board discussed the proposals from Civic Plus and InTuvio for the new county website.

A motion was made by Bodenstedt to take no action on the proposals; motion failed due to a lack of a second.

**Action 15469C:** A motion was made by Epp and seconded by Freng to approve InTuvio as the Yankton County website provider. Voting aye: Epp, Freng and Woods. Voting nay: Kettering and Bodenstedt. Motion carried 3-2.

**Action 15470C:** A motion was made by Kettering and seconded by Bodenstedt to appoint a current employee to be accountable for managing the information given to InTuvio. Roll call vote was taken with Bodenstedt, Kettering, Epp, and Woods voting aye and Freng voting nay; motion carried.

**Action 15471C:** A motion was made by Kettering and seconded by Freng to appoint Garry Moore, Louis Johnson, Jeff Gudahl, Cheri Loest, Dean Gustad, Barry VanOsdel, Ray Epp, Don Kettering, and Brian Gustad to be the Road & Bridge Task Force. All present voted aye; motion carried.

Yankton County Personnel Handbook: Discussion was held to appoint employees to form committee to update the handbook.

Commissioner Kettering informed the board of the findings of the plane trip to view road construction equipment in Oklahoma. The trip was provided by Kolberg Pioneer.

The board discussed continuing the town hall meetings for 2016. The board also discussed implementing consent agenda for plats, monthly reports, and routine county business.

**Action 15472C:** A motion was made by Freng and seconded by Bodenstedt to approve the November, 2015 gross payroll: **Commissioners:** \$5,104.42; **Auditor:** \$12,421.43; **Treasurer:** \$14,034.59; **States Attorney:** \$23,451.76; **Custodian:** \$5,160.33; **Director of Equalization:** \$20,994.75; **Register of Deeds:** \$12,627.37; **Veterans Service:** \$2,394.76; **Courthouse & Safety Center:** \$5,686.29; **Sheriff:** \$55,587.73; **County Jail:** \$62,227.09; **Coroner:** \$1,000.00; **Juvenile:** \$0.00; **Nurse:** \$2,688.82; **Ambulance:** \$50,480.52; **WIC:** \$1,626.50; **Extension:** \$6,316.37; **Soil Conservation:** \$2,618.70; **Weed:** \$1,789.47; **Planning & Zoning:** \$6,975.66; **Road & Bridge:** \$71,411.97; **E911:** \$160.94; **OEMHS:** \$5,085.09; **24-7 Program:** \$3,628.00. South Dakota Retirement System \$28,139.00 (Other Employees), South Dakota Retirement System \$17,171.40 (Sheriff/EDS), South Dakota Retirement System (Payroll Deduction-Spouse Opt) \$222.57, South Dakota Retirement System (Supplemental) \$3,750.00, American Family Life Assurance Company (AFLAC) \$3,808.05, Legalshield \$25.90, Office of Child Support \$903.00, Nationwide Retirement Solutions \$69.44, First Dakota National Bank \$35,215.18 (Withholding), First Dakota National Bank \$45,681.44 (FICA) First Dakota National Bank \$10,683.52 (Medicare), Boston Mutual Life Insurance \$503.09, Colonial Life & Accident \$1,478.86, Avera Health Plans \$54,816.51, Optilegra \$529.38. Gross Payroll \$373,526.56, Net Payroll \$275,904.75. All present voted aye; motion carried.

**Action 15473C:** A motion was made by Freng and seconded by Epp that the Yankton County Government Center will close at noon on December 24, 2015 in conjunction with the State offices in Pierre.

**Action 15474C:** A motion was made by Epp and seconded by Bodenstedt to adjourn. All present voted aye; motion carried.

The next regular meeting will be Tuesday, December 15, 2015.

**Todd Woods**, Chairman  
Yankton County Commission

ATTENT:  
**Karen Faerber**, Deputy County Auditor  
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Pelicans fly in formation over the San Onofre Generating Station in San Clemente, Calif. (Allen J. Schaben/Los Angeles Times/TNS)

# The New Green?

## Nuclear Energy Being Pitched In Climate Change Fight

BY EVAN HALPER

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MOUNTAIN VIEW, Calif. — The state that spawned a generation of activists committed to shutting down nuclear reactors and crippling the industry has lately become a hotbed of advocacy and financial support for fighting global warming with, of all things, nuclear power.

Encouraged by the Obama administration, notable California innovators and financiers are looking to reinvent the industry in the mold of wind and solar power. They are betting on prototype technologies that seek to replace the hulking plants of today with smaller, nimbler units. Environmentally minded nuclear engineers argue that they can be designed so safely that they might be “huggable.” They talk of power plants that consume nuclear waste instead of creating it.

State leaders aren’t necessarily rushing to embrace the vision in a place where all but one nuclear plant have been mothballed and where old-guard nuclear safety advocates warn that so-called advanced nuclear technologies are an attempt to put shiny earrings on the same old pig.

But the investors and nuclear scientists opening startup labs in the office parks of California’s technology hubs and within the research centers of universities see a more influential ally in the White House.

Nuclear power is at the nub of the Obama administration’s “all of the above” strategy for reinventing the energy industry in an era of climate change, and its faith in the fraught power source has captured the imagination of some notable and deep-pocketed West Coast thinkers.

Investors, including Microsoft founder Bill Gates and PayPal co-founder Peter Thiel, have poured about \$2 billion into a few dozen small outfits, many of which are concentrated in the West. The entrepreneurs behind them are racing to design nuclear power facilities engineered to seem no more imposing than a neighborhood arts center.

“This is the place to be,” said Jacob DeWitte, chief executive of UPower, a startup that recently migrated here from Cambridge, Mass., in its quest to create modular nuclear plants with reactors small enough to fit inside a shipping container and sturdier than “a brick outhouse.”

“In other places you would tell people you’ve got a nuclear startup and they look at you like you are kind of nuts,” he said. “But here in Silicon Valley it is like, ‘That’s super cool. Can I help?’ There’s that ethos here.”

DeWitte, 30, talks in terms that make some veterans of the decades long struggle over nuclear power chafe, promising his firm will build units that could safely run on existing stockpiles of nuclear waste, all while being “meltdown-proof” and not using any material that terrorists could steal to turn into a weapon.

That may all be possible someday, say the nuclear experts at the Union of Concerned Sci-

entists, but that day is probably several decades and many tens of billions of dollars away. The sudden excitement around nuclear materials makes them nervous. They say they have seen this before.

“The people who deny or downplay the risks involved are doing a disservice to the future of nuclear power that leads to complacency, and complacency leads to Fukushima,” said Edwin Lyman, a senior scientist at the organization. “This is very complex. It is hard. It costs a lot. It is slow, especially to develop advanced systems. ... It seems nuclear will at most be a minor contribution over the next few decades to dealing with the climate crisis.”

**“This is what the world needs. The world needs a cheap source of carbon-free power that is even lower cost than coal if we want to avoid the devastation caused by fossil fuels.”**

LESLIE DEWAN

That’s not the view inside the stylish, airy San Francisco offices of Thiel’s Founders Fund, where he and other venture capitalists, perhaps inspired by the views from the giant windows overlooking Presidio Park, make big bets on big ideas. Thiel made about \$1 billion with an early \$500,000 investment in Facebook. He got in on the ground floor with Yelp. He and his partners at PayPal, including Elon Musk, grew the online payment service from nothing to a firm that eBay paid \$1.5 billion to acquire.

And lately Founders Fund is excited about zero-emission nuclear power as a solution to climate change. It has infused \$3 million into Transatomic, a startup in Cambridge launched by two graduates from MIT’s nuclear engineering program who have been pitching their vision in small networking meetings and, of course, TED Talks.

“I became a nuclear engineer because I am an environmentalist,” said Leslie Dewan, the 31-year-old co-founder of Transatomic. “This is what the world needs. The world needs a cheap source of carbon-free power that is even lower cost than coal if we want to avoid the devastation caused by fossil fuels.”

Her faith in nuclear energy is underscored by the fact that she launched her company only a week after the Fukushima nuclear plant disaster in Japan in 2011. The particular day also happened to be the 25th anniversary of the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear power plant disaster in Ukraine.

The faith is shared by Founders Fund partner Scott Nolan, who is among the few equipped to judge the mind-bending Transatomic blueprints on their merits. Nolan is a rocket scientist. Earlier in his career, he built propulsion systems at a firm that is perhaps even more audacious than Transatomic: Musk’s space exploration company, SpaceX.

“We believe they have the right technology, that it is going to eliminate a lot of the concerns

that have existed around nuclear,” Nolan said. “We think it can work.”

He talks about the anxieties around nuclear power: the potential for radioactive release at a plant, the possibility terrorists will steal material to build a dirty bomb, the dangerous waste that won’t decompose for thousands of years, the immense costs.

Then he dissects each concern, explaining why Transatomic’s technology makes the issue obsolete. He talks about a plant that would run on existing nuclear waste and be “classified as walk-away safe. There is no way for it to go unstable.”

The Sierra Club says it has all the makings of a snake-oil sale.

“There is always such a rosy picture coming from the industry of what it can deliver with these technologies, yet it has such a terrible history with over-promising and under-delivering,” said John Coequet, the Sierra Club’s director of international climate programs. The organization would prefer the Obama administration abandon

the extremely costly pursuit of advanced nuclear power in favor of greater investment in renewable energy such as solar and wind power.

But that’s not the direction the White House is headed. It hosted a nuclear power summit last month during which John Holdren, the president’s senior adviser on science and technology, expressed hope of “making nuclear energy everything that it can be, and thus a major contributor in this country and worldwide to minimizing the risks from climate change.”

The administration announced its budget plan, including \$900 million in new funding for development of advanced nuclear technologies, as well as plans to allow firms like UPower and Transatomic access to testing facilities in federally funded national research labs, which the firms had been lobbying for. This year, the House passed a resolution nudging regulators to nurture the industry.

Such moves have come at the urging of some muscular neoliberal think tanks in California and Washington, D.C.

The Breakthrough Institute in Oakland, where philanthropist Rachel Pritzker and Whole Earth Catalog founder Stewart Brand sit on the board, has been a major proponent of the technologies as a solution to climate change, most famously in the 2013 documentary “Pandora’s Promise,” which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival. Pritzker is also on the board of Third Way, an influential advocacy group best known for helping centrist Democrats find bipartisan approaches to policy disputes. The group, which receives some nuclear industry funding, is leading the push in Washington D.C.

“We look at the climate challenges we face and the continued growth of energy in places like India and China, and we don’t see a choice,” said Josh Freed, vice president for clean energy at Third Way. “You have to do this.”

## Feds Look To Maintain Yellowstone Bear Numbers

BY MATTHEW BROWN

Associated Press

BILLINGS, Mont. — Wildlife managers will seek to maintain grizzly bear numbers in the three-state Yellowstone region near current levels as they move toward lifting protections for the threatened species, a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service spokeswoman said Wednesday.

The agency has set a management goal of 674 grizzly bears across the 19,300-square-mile region. That’s enough of the animals to “ensure a sustainable and resilient population,” spokeswoman Serena Baker said.

The population target is consistent with the average number of bears between 2002 and 2014. But it’s about 6 percent below the most recent tally of 714 bears at the end of 2014.

The Yellowstone region encompasses a vast area of wilderness,

parks and forested lands in Montana, Wyoming and Idaho. Conflicts between bears and humans have spiked in recent years as grizzlies push into areas with more people and livestock.

State wildlife officials want an end to federal protections to allow limited hunting. They’ve been pushing for almost a decade to revoke the animal’s threatened status, a step that was taken in 2007 only to be reversed by a federal judge two years later.

Under an agreement with Fish and Wildlife Service Director Dan Ashe, state wildlife officials have committed to halting hunting if population dips below 600 bears across the region. If the population increases, more bears could be killed, according to state and federal officials.

“It would be very conservative to start,” said Ron Aasheim, a spokesman for Montana Fish, Wildlife and

Parks. “What we need to do is show that we are fully intending to manage bears reasonably, and we will stay above certain levels. If we’re going to hunt, we would have to quit that at a certain point.”

Bears living outside the 19,300-square-mile Yellowstone “monitoring area” would not be counted toward the population goal. Similarly, bears killed outside the monitoring area would not count toward annual bear mortality caps.

A decision on whether to propose a rule to lift protections is expected in early 2016, Baker said. No such proposal is pending for the only other large concentration of grizzlies in the Lower 48, an area around Glacier National Park in northwest Montana and southern Canada with an estimated 1,000 bears.

Some wildlife advocates contend the Yellowstone population remains too fragile to justify lifting protec-

tions. In recent months, they’ve been joined in their opposition by representatives of dozens of American Indian tribes, primarily in the American West, who don’t want trophy hunting of a species many tribes consider sacred.

Since the 2009 court ruling affecting Yellowstone bears, government biologists have sought to bolster with new research their conclusions that bear food supplies are not threatened by climate change and other factors. They’ve also pledged that some habitat protections would remain in place regardless of the animal’s legal status.

Endangered Species Act protections for grizzlies have been in place since 1975, after hunting and trapping drove them to widespread extermination early last century.

Since 2010, grizzlies have killed six people in and around Yellowstone and regularly maul hunters and domestic livestock outside the park.