

Warming is ravaging farming, report says

By Judith Kohler

Associated Press

DENVER — Climate change is increasing the risk of U.S. crop failures, depleting the nation's water resources and contributing to outbreaks of invasive species and insects, the U.S. Department of Agriculture said in a report released last week.

Those and other problems for the U.S. livestock and forestry industries will persist for at least the next 25 years, said the report compiled by 38 scientists for use by water and land managers.

"I think what's really eye-opening is the depth and breadth of the impacts and consequences going on right now," said Tony Janetos, a study author and director of the

Joint Global Change Research Institute at the University of Maryland.

Scientists reviewed and synthesized research from more than 1,000 publications, rather than conduct new research, to produce the report. It's part of a federal assessment of global warming for the U.S. Climate Change Science Program, sponsored by 13 federal agencies.

"Just to see it all there like that and to realize the impacts are pervasive right now is a little bit scary," said Peter Backlund, director of research relations at the National Center for Atmospheric Research in Boulder.

Drought-strained forests in the West and Southeast are easy prey for tree-killing insects like bark beetles. Snow in the Western mountains is melting earlier, making it

more difficult for managers overseeing a long-established system of reservoirs and irrigation ditches that serves Western states.

The Southeast doesn't have the same kind of storage system because rain historically has been more consistent. Current weather disruptions have the region struggling with drought, Janetos said.

Rising carbon dioxide levels are changing the metabolism of grasses and shrubs on range land, decreasing the protein levels in plants eaten by cattle. Sea corals are dying as water temperatures rise.

Warmer, drier weather is altering the biodiversity of deserts in the Southwest and the high, colder deserts of Nevada, Utah and eastern Washington, said Steve Archer of the University of Arizona. Plants

and animals already living in extreme conditions face threats from wildfires and nonnative species, he said.

"These areas historically support a large ranching industry, wildlife habitat," Archer said. "They are major watersheds and airsheds."

The scientists said longer growing seasons provided by higher temperatures don't necessarily translate into bigger crop yields because plants have certain growth patterns.

Their report focuses on the next 25 to 50 years, rather than the next 100 years as other studies have done.

"Sometimes it's so far out that people just don't grasp that it's a problem. This really brings it home," said Jerry Hatfield, lab director of the National Soil Tilth

laboratory in Ames, Iowa.

The report makes no recommendations. Hatfield said it could help farmers consider breeding new strains of drought-tolerant varieties of corn and other crops and new planting cycles to accommodate seasonal changes.

Tom Lauridson said the report confirms what he has seen as a wheat farmer in northeastern Colorado.

The third-generation Colorado farmer, who has a doctorate in plant physiology and does outreach work for Colorado State University, said the region's droughts seem longer than usual.

"It's enough that we're definitely in the process of rethinking if it is really a good idea to invest in farm land," Lauridson said.

Utah Pride Festival lures thousands

Becker leads 65 floats, marchers in downtown parade

By Arthur Raymond

Deseret News

The theme of the 2008 Utah Pride Festival, "Come Together," was in full evidence Sunday as thousands gathered along the event's parade route, and tens of thousands were expected to attend the final day's festivities at the downtown Library Square/Salt Lake City-County Building site.

Salt Lake City Mayor Ralph Becker sported a hot-pink feather boa as he led more than 65 floats, marchers and dancers through downtown in a celebration of diversity and a call to tolerance and inclusive community spirit.

Yana Walton, director of communications for the Utah Pride Center, the event's programming body, said this year's version was the biggest yet.

"Last year we had about 25,000 in attendance, and this year we're expecting to far exceed that," Walton said. "We had more groups in the parade, 50 more vendors here at the grounds... and over 2,700 people went to our concert on Saturday... way more than last year."

The Utah Pride Center is a group committed to "be a catalyst for personal growth, acceptance and equality for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people in Utah."

Walton said success of this year's event was due to a growing GLBT community in Utah, and a higher energy level brought on by issues surrounding the presidential



SCOTT G. WINTERTON, DESERET NEWS

Money is tossed into a large rainbow fabric during Sunday's Pride Festival parade in Salt Lake City.



SCOTT G. WINTERTON, DESERET NEWS

The City-County Building, rear, and Library Square were principal venues for Utah Pride Festival events. Organizers called this year's version Utah's biggest yet.

election year. She also noted the recent Utah legislative approval of a Salt Lake City mutual commitment registry and the lifting of a ban on gay marriage in California have contributed to an enthusiastic environment.

"It is a huge reason to celebrate," Walton said. "Speak-

ing for myself, personally, it gives us something to hope for."

Sunday's gathering was a mix of entertainment, food, politics and community involvement. Local and state political candidates were present, as well as outreach and education groups. The

statewide political advocacy group, Equality Utah, was registering voters as part of their People's House Project. Executive Director Mike Thompson said in addition to registering new voters, the group was asking for a commitment from the registrars to get to the polls in November.

"We're here to remind people that what happens in government is about the people," Thompson said. "We're focusing on voter registration, voter education and get out the vote efforts."

Local and national musical acts performed on two stages and dozens of local eateries provided food and refreshments.

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Y. college names associate dean

PROVO — Dean David B. Magleby of the Brigham Young University College of Family, Home and Social Sciences has announced the appointment of Susan Sessions Rugh, BYU associate professor of American history, to a three-year term as the new associate dean for the college.

Rugh will replace Elaine Walton, who will be taking a professional development leave of absence to BYU-Hawaii during the upcoming academic year.

"The college has greatly benefitted from Elaine's strong leadership and wisdom," Magleby said. "Elaine has led by example in keeping her research and teaching activities active while shouldering a heavy administrative assignment, and she will be missed."

As associate dean, Rugh will be primarily responsible for curriculum, undergraduate and graduate teaching, advisement, accreditation, assessment, the college writing initiative and other matters.

"Susan is a distinguished scholar and superb teacher," said Magleby. Rugh has recently served as chairwoman of the Rank and Status Committee for the college, and has been a member of numerous other academic councils and advisory committees.

Rugh received her Ph.D. in American history from the University of Chicago in 1993. She began teaching at BYU in 1997 and has since published two books and numerous articles on rural America and the history of travel and tourism.

Slate of volunteers honored at UVSC

OREM — Utah Valley State College honored several people and groups at the school's annual Volunteer Appreciation Banquet.

Also, for the first time, the school gave a Community Partner of the Year award.

"We try and highlight people here at (Utah Valley) that have done an outstanding job incorporating service into their class, life and others' lives," said Melanie Sorensen, program coordinator for UVSC's volunteer and service learning center. "They are all nominated, which I feel gives greater meaning to the award than our department just choosing people."

The community-partner award went to Becky Miner, who helps the community with preschools, reading

and tutoring programs and helps direct and open literacy centers in public and private schools, libraries and community centers.

The Service-Learning Faculty of the Year award went to DeWayne Erdmann, who teaches his students that giving back to the community is an essential part of being a builder. His students participate in the Sub Contractor for Santa each year and work with Habitat for Humanity.

The Student Volunteer of the Year award went to Yazmin Montero. She was the program director for the UVSC food drive this school year, in addition to her involvement in the Latinos Unidos Club on campus, which leads several service functions in the community.

NSA selects Y. professor

PROVO — The National Security Agency has selected a Brigham Young University computer science professor to mentor top graduate-level interns working on key national security issues for

the U.S. Department of Defense.

As this year's distinguished visiting professor, Sean Warnick will mentor top-notch interns from the NSA's Summer Program for Operations Research Technology (SPORT) program, helping them create mathematical models, conduct decision analysis and employ sophisticated simulations on some of the most state-of-the-art computing facilities in the world.

Warnick said he was "quite surprised" when the government called him last summer and asked him to apply for the program.

"Apparently it's not just an ordinary summer position but an opportunity to work on a wide range of important projects," Warnick said. "I am eager to spearhead a strong relationship between our students at BYU and the Department of Defense."

Administered by the NSA Enterprise Operations Research, Modeling and Simulation Group, the position is highly competitive and is offered to a professor with a distinguished record in both

decision science applications and student mentoring.

"It is important that we connect to the best emerging talent when solving critical problems," said Francine Goode, director of the SPORT program.

Warnick's aptitude for connecting with students and the breadth of his research applications impressed Goode and other NSA representatives who visited his Information and Decision Algorithms Laboratories (IDeA Labs) at BYU last fall.

"It is an amazing environment where students from various disciplines come together to work on decision problems arising in a variety of areas, from microbiology to economics," Goode said of the lab.

Warnick's work focuses on the feedback control of complex dynamical systems, with applications including proteomic network reconstruction, scheduling of batch manufacturing systems, and market power and valuation analyses in merger-and-acquisition studies.

UVSC professor gets fellowship in ethics

OREM — David Clark Knowlton, associate professor of behavioral science at Utah Valley State College, is the recipient of the University Faculty Fellowship in Ethics for the 2008-09 academic year.

The grant, worth \$7,000, will go toward Knowlton's research regarding the study of the ethics and anthropology of Christianity among the indigenous people of Bolivia.

The purpose of the University Faculty Fellowship in Ethics is to facilitate faculty scholarship in interdisciplinary ethics, exploring moral challenges in a variety of disciplines, the school said.

Knowlton, a social anthropologist, has been actively involved in researching religious and social change in Bolivia as well as the development of supranational religions.

Since his first conversations with rural Bolivians, who tutored him in their culture, Knowlton said he has been concerned with the ways globalized society impacts lesser-known areas of the world, such as Bolivia.

Knowlton will present his findings on his research and scholarship during his fellowship year at the University Ethics Faculty Fellow keynote address during Ethics Awareness Week in 2009.

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