



Written by [Rebecca Terrell](#) on November 4, 2013

Executive Order Ignores Climate Reality

President Obama is “preparing the United States for the Impacts of Climate Change,” by his new [executive order](#) issued Friday. The order begins with a litany of extreme weather events that Obama claims are on the increase across the nation and which he uses to justify circumventing Congress to foist his climate-change agenda on the country.

The Sierra Club immediately issued a [statement](#) applauding the president’s reaction to the “climate crisis and increasingly erratic weather events.”

It is apparent that neither Obama nor the Sierra Club has been monitoring data from the president’s own National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The executive order first cites “an increase in prolonged periods of excessively high temperatures.” This is a false assertion in view of records from NOAA and the U.S. Historical Climatology Network. Using raw data from these bureaus, Paul Dorian with [The SI Organization](#), a private defense contractor and weather advisor to government agencies such as NASA and NOAA, charted temperatures in the United States since 1910. “The five summers with the highest number of 100 degree days across the US are as follows: 1936, 1934, 1954, 1980 and 1930,” noted Dorian, who pointed out that the number of high temperature records this year is less than half the number in 2012.

Next, the president lists “more heavy downpours,” and later “more severe droughts.” But again the facts prove otherwise for both extremes. Raw data from NOAA for precipitation in the 48 contiguous states shows an upward linear trend since 1895 of 1.6 inches per century, as [charted](#) by Craig Loehle, Ph.D., principal scientist at the National Council for Air and Stream Development. Since 1976, that trend lowered to 0.58 inches per century, reaching its lowest during the period of 1976 to 2005 at 0.35 inches per century. Hardly a gullywasher! Additionally, in [testimony](#) at a U.S. Senate hearing on global warming earlier this year, Dr. Roger Pielke, Jr., environmental studies professor with the University of Colorado, observed, “Flood losses as a percentage of US GDP have dropped by about 75 percent since 1940.”

As to droughts, Pielke added that they have “for the most part, become shorter [and] less frequent, and cover[ed] a smaller portion of the U.S. over the last century.” In fact, NOAA records show the [worst drought years](#) of the past century were 1934 and 1939. During the harsh drought of 2012, the journal [Nature](#) featured a research paper entitled *Little Change in Global Drought Over the Past 60 Years*.

Also on Obama’s doom-and-gloom list is the claim of an increase in wildfires. However, using data from the president’s [National Interagency Fire Center](#), Dorian found that 2013 is slated to hold the record for the lowest number of wildfires in the last 10 years. This year also has the second lowest acreage involved, despite “a recent change in government fire policy that no longer aims to extinguish fires immediately after they begin,” wrote James M. Taylor, managing editor of *Environment & Climate News*, [reporting](#) on a Senate climate-change hearing held in July. The information was part of testimony by U.S. Senator Jeff Sessions (R-Ala.), who also “presented a chart showing the number of U.S. wildfires in long-term decline.”



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But the myth of wildfires caused by climate change is not confined to U.S. borders. Recently the Australian prime minister [scoffed](#) at a UN official who blamed October's raging wildfires in New South Wales on global warming.

President Obama next alleges that permafrost thawing is "already affecting communities, natural resources, ecosystems, economies and public health across the Nation." Really? The only places in the United States that have permafrost — soil that remains frozen for two or more consecutive years — are the high latitude areas of Alaska. The last time permafrost touched any of the lower 48 states was thousands of years ago during the period known as the [Last Glacial Maximum](#). However, thawing permafrost contributes to erosion and releases greenhouse gases such as methane and hydrocarbons. It's obviously bad for the environment and exacerbates global warming, right? Not according to geoscientist and permafrost expert Georg Delisle, who published a [study](#) in *Geophysical Research Letters* concluding that most arctic permafrost is stable and will be for the foreseeable future. Moreover, using ice core evidence, he proved that during warming periods in the last 10,000 years (far warmer than today) there was no elevated release of greenhouse gases.

But that is not all. Ocean acidification is also a threat, says the president. The ocean absorbs around 25 percent of carbon dioxide emissions from human activity, changing the acid-base balance of seawater. The National Resources Defense Council released a 2009 film, [Acid Test: The Global Challenge of Ocean Acidification](#), which claimed that ocean acidification threatens coral reef and marine life extinction and will therefore have detrimental impacts on public welfare and economies. After the film's debut, Craig Idso, founder of the Center for the Study of Carbon Dioxide and Global Change, published a [rebuttal](#) calling it a "propagandized view of ocean acidification." He cited dozens of studies including real-world data and laboratory experiments and concluded: "It is clear that recent theoretical claims of impending marine species extinctions, due to increases in the atmosphere's CO₂ concentration, have no basis in empirical reality. In fact, these unsupportable contentions are typically refuted by demonstrable facts."

Last on Obama's climate-threats list is sea-level rise, a poster child of global-warming alarmists since former Vice President Al Gore's 2006 film [An Inconvenient Truth](#) predicted that levels would rise 20 feet, flooding major cities and displacing millions of people. However, a new [study](#) by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem proves to be rather "inconvenient" for Obama. Researchers recorded data from tide gauges around the globe from 1807 to 2010. "Although mean sea levels are rising by 1 mm/year, sea level rise is local rather than global," they concluded. The areas most affected are in the Baltic and Adriatic Seas, southeast Asia, and the U.S. Atlantic coast. Sixty-one percent of the gauges showed stable sea levels, and four percent revealed declines averaging six millimeters per year.

Curiously missing from Obama's list of climate grievances are hurricanes, but that is possibly because we haven't had any major storms this year. In fact, 2013's Accumulated Cyclone Energy ([ACE](#)) index, which measures the duration and intensity of tropical storms, shows the Atlantic Basin is at 29 percent of average from 1981 to 2010. Only six other years since 1950 have recorded lower ACE indices. Oddly, the eastern Pacific Ocean has been abnormally calm as well. Dorian says there is only one other year in recorded history — 1968 — when the Atlantic and eastern Pacific have been inactive simultaneously. He adds, "Just as a point of comparison, in 1954 the US was hit by 3 major hurricanes in less than 10 weeks." These were Carol and Edna, category 3 hurricanes with landfall in New England, and Hazel, a category 4 with landfall in North and South Carolina.

Additionally, 2013 boasts one of the lowest numbers of [tornadoes](#) in several decades and, again according to NOAA, there has been a [downward trend](#) in strong to violent tornadoes from 1954 until



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now.

The president's assertion that extreme weather events are increasing is obviously false. But that has not stopped him from establishing, through Friday's executive order, a task force manned mainly by Democrats with the authority to impose funding restrictions on states and localities as well as constraints on land and resource use. While Obama prepares the country "for the impacts of climate change," the country should brace itself for ever increasing wastes of taxpayer dollars on scare tactics and unconstitutional bureaucratic expansion.

Extreme weather events are not increasing, but illegitimate executive powers most certainly are.



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