

02/2011

Re: Oil facts

Keith Comstock (Letters, 1/26/2011) has a good idea: let's reduce our dependence on foreign oil. But his solution is slightly at odds with geological reality starting with the observation that while the US consumes some 25% of the world's oil production, our domestic reserves contain only around 2% of the oil on our planet. Now one might ask, how did all our oil end up underneath their sand, but the fact is that even if we developed all our reserves at current US consumption rates we would have enough domestic oil to last about 4 years, and then what?

Comstock mentions oil sands and they are a possibility, but strip mining significant portions the western US might be considered a less than ideal solution, not to mention the economic and carbon greenhouse gas footprint of such endeavors. His dismissal of alternative renewables as "government subsidized" while mentioning in the same breath "geothermal, hydro or nuclear" takes one's own breath away, since these resources were, and still are, heavily subsidized by the government. And let's not forget the billions of government dollars in tax breaks (and Texas sized apologies) we are still giving oil companies, who seem to be doing just fine, thank-you.

I have a better solution. And that is to remove ideological misinformation from our discussion and focus on real efforts to move us to a better future. One that is economically and environmentally sound, and even more importantly, based on the world we actually live in.

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