

Global warming fight faces major obstacles

By: Dan Becker and James Gerstenzang, *Opinion Contributors*

Climate superlobby should be modeled on the New Deal's NRA to deliver clean cars, clean energy and other solutions: Another view

Building a massive environmental organization to fight global warming — much as the National Rifle Association lobbies against gun control — is an intriguing idea. But no matter the size and funding, it would face obstacles:

- Big autos, big oil and big utilities, which pollute as part of business, lobby against environmental protections. Automakers devote vast sums of their roughly \$14 billion marketing budget advertising gas-guzzling SUVs. The oil industry profits by fueling those trucks. And the coal industry enjoys a president who peddles fake news about coal's rebirth.
- Much of the news media devote only episodic attention to the threats global warming poses, reporting on its most scary impacts, including hurricanes and wildfires, without connecting the dots to the climate.
- Consumers, misled by polluters and offered few nonpolluting vehicles and other products, end up declining to act in their long-term health interest. They have yet to put real pressure on government officials to adopt strong laws and regulations. Nor do they shun industries that fail to limit the burning of coal, petroleum and gas.
- In the near term, a president who ignores science has declared global warming a "hoax." His environmental rollbacks appear drawn up by the polluters. And virtually every Republican in Congress is a global warming denier.

As Friday's massive and shocking report issued by 13 federal agencies made clear, we face the environmental equivalent of the Great Depression. A climate adulterated by industry's carbon dioxide pollution — two-thirds of it from transportation and power plants — is already spreading tropical diseases, delivering rising seas, and fueling fierce hurricanes and wildfires.

So, yes, an NRA-like structure is fine, but one modeled after the New Deal's NRA — the National (Industrial) Recovery Act, which galvanized President Franklin Roosevelt's fight for economic recovery. That's what we need — delivering clean cars, clean energy and other solutions — to tackle global warming.

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