

Opinion: Stop drinking the renewable energy Kool-Aid

By Tyrus W. Cobb

Proponents of “green energy” continue to hype the potential of solar, wind, biomass and other renewable resources as cheap, abundant engines that can efficiently propel economic growth in the state.

But these cheerleaders ignore the soaring costs associated with producing electricity from these sources, a differential that will only be magnified as vast new reserves of traditional fossil fuels become available.

These adherents seem unaware of the shale gas revolution that has occurred in the past few years and the coming explosion of oil production in North America. Hydraulic fracturing (“fracking”) has unearthed vast natural gas reserves previously buried in inaccessible shale rock.

There is a historic shift occurring in global oil and gas production. American expert Dan Yergen predicts an amazing “new rebalancing,” with the Western Hemisphere moving back to self-sufficiency and an end to our reliance on long-distance energy shipments from areas of conflict. Venezuela is now considered to have bigger oil reserves than Saudi Arabia, new finds in the Arctic area are very promising and recent oil exploits in Canada and the U.S. suggest that technology might be trumping geology.

Offshore oil will be tapped, but the most significant development is the exploitation of extensive rock formations ranging from Texas to North Dakota, believed previously to be too costly and technologically impossible to extract the fuels.

Tyrus W. Cobb of Reno served as special assistant to President Ronald Reagan for national security affairs 1983-89.

Read the whole story