

Low Sierra snow seen as piece of alarming climate picture

By Kurtis Alexander, San Francisco Chronicle

A fifth year of disappointing snow in the Sierra is part of a much larger predicament of record-low snow across the Northern Hemisphere, a setback that scientists identified Wednesday as another reminder of the alarming pace of human-caused global warming.

A panel of climate experts organized by SEARCH, or the Study of Environmental Arctic Change, met in Washington, D.C., to draw attention to the historic melt-off of snow and ice during the first six months of 2016 – and the resulting problems.

“We lost the snow earlier than anytime on record, and it wasn’t just in one part of the snow-covered universe,” said Dave Robinson, New Jersey state climatologist at Rutgers University, noting that as much as 30 percent of the land in the Northern Hemisphere is typically white. “This is the lowest spring snow extent on record.”

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