

Santa Claus is not happy

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(published in the Anchorage Press)

Santa Claus is not happy. Because of global warming, Santa's homestead is melting and his reindeer are hungry.

Santa is deeply disappointed that the Bush Administration refused last week to cooperate with the rest of the world in achieving mandatory emission reductions of greenhouse gases. As a result, Santa is only going to give President Bush and Vice President Cheney a symbolic lump of coal in their Christmas stockings this year.

While visiting North Pole, Alaska, this weekend Santa compared his plight with that of Alaskans – Texas's good neighbors.

Holding copies of numerous scientific studies in his bare hands (it was too warm to wear mittens), Santa noted that according to scientists at NASA and the National Snow and Ice Data Center, there was a record low amount of sea ice this summer in the Arctic Ocean. *It is as if an area twice the size of Texas* had melted away since 1979.

If warming continues at this rate, there will be no summer ice at the North Pole by the end of the century. "My home at the North Pole will disappear," Santa stated dejectedly. "Polar Bears, ice seals, as well as Mrs. Claus and I will lose our habitat."

He also pointed to an emaciated Blitzen. "Scientists and indigenous peoples know that reindeer are suffering because of global warming. They can't get to their food because it's covered with rain-hardened ice instead of snow and they are losing their tundra habitat," Santa added.

Santa knew that Americans would understand his plight. For example, in just the last two years Alaskans have experienced record breaking fire seasons, glacier retreat, diseases, storms, temperatures, and more from global warming.

"I've kept a list of global warming problems, and checked it twice," observed Santa. That list includes:

- ◆ In 2004 and 2005, fires ravaged Alaska. Last year over 6.6 million acres burned, in the largest Alaska fire season ever documented, an amount of land greater than the entire area of Maryland.
- ◆ Alaskan glaciers are melting at unprecedented rates, raising sea level.

- ◆ Migratory seabirds, and many other animals enjoyed by people throughout the nation, are being seriously harmed by global warming. Because temperatures were 5.4 degrees F above normal, kittiwakes began to fail in June and July, with the adults laying eggs, but then abandoning them. Red-faced cormorants actually produced young, but even they left in late July, abandoning nests full of big dead chicks.
- ◆ Like Texas and Louisiana, Western Alaska experienced a brutal, global warming enhanced storm in late September, adversely affecting 34 communities. The storm surge in Nome was 9 feet above normal high tides with waves of 12 to 15 feet. Newtok saw 5 to 10 feet of beach disappear along with equipment like a 1,000 gallon fuel tank. It will cost from \$100 million to \$400 million, at least, to move villages that are crumbling into the sea

“These are just a few examples of the real, measurable, and tragic costs of global warming in America,” commented Santa sadly. “I’m having a little trouble with my Ho, Ho, Ho this year.”

“With my lump of coal, I’m sending a message to the President and Vice President: America needs to lead the world on climate change issues. Among other motivators, many major companies such as British Petroleum, Johnson and Johnson, and 3M have demonstrated that cutting greenhouse emissions is not only achievable but also very good for the bottom line.”

“Global warming is jeopardizing my home, my reindeer, the nation, and the world.” Santa’s last words were, “Don’t be the Grinch that really steals Christmas, Mr. President.”