

The Zonie Report

A new kind of news for Arizona.

VP pick Palin wins environmentalist ‘Dodo’ prize

By John Collins Rudolf · September 26, 2008 · [Print This Article](#)

As prizes go, it’s probably not one you’d want on your trophy shelf: the Center for Biological Diversity’s Rubber Dodo award.

This year’s recipient is governor of Alaska and Republican vice presidential nominee Sarah Palin.



“She richly deserves it,” says Tim Ellis, spokesman for the [Tucson-based group](#). “Her environmental record is a disaster and we just wanted to draw attention to that.”

The handsome trophy, pictured above, honors Palin “for seeking to block Endangered Species Act protection for the polar bear, lying about, then suppressing state scientific reviews, and denying that greenhouse gas emissions cause global warming.”

The trophy will be mailed to the governor’s mansion sometime this week, I’m told.

“It’s just about ready to fly north,” says Ellis.

Despite the [fairly obvious meltdown occurring in her home state](#) – thawing permafrost, disappearing sea ice, unseasonably warm winters and generally weird weather – Palin still doesn’t believe that human activity is having an impact on the climate.

“A changing environment will affect Alaska more than any other state, because of our location. I’m not one though who would attribute it to being man-made,” [Palin told the right-wing magazine](#) Newsmax earlier this summer.

It’s a view that puts her to the right even of the leaders of her own party.

It was the Bush administration’s Department of the Interior, after all, that finally labeled the polar bear as ‘threatened,’ (albeit without taking any actions that would protect the bear’s habitat from offshore oil drilling or carbon emissions.)

If Palin doesn't believe in manmade climate change, well, I suppose that's her right.

But where she crossed the line from fool to crook was by using her power as governor of Alaska to obscure the work of biologists with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, critics say.

Palin claimed that studies by state biologists cast doubt on the conclusions of federal scientists, who had determined that vanishing sea ice threatened the bears. Without scientific consensus, she said, listing the bears as endangered or threatened was a mistake.

"I strongly believe that adding them to the list is the wrong move at this time. My decision is based on a comprehensive review by state wildlife officials of scientific information from a broad range of climate, ice and polar bear experts," she wrote in a New York Times editorial.

But through a Freedom of Information Act request, a University of Alaska got his hands on the studies in question — which said nothing of the sort.

"Essentially, she lied," University of Alaska professor Rick Steiner told [ABC News](#).

The move vaulted her over the opposition and earned her the coveted Rubber Dodo – and the enmity of environmental crusaders like Kieran Suckling, executive director of the Center for Biological Diversity.

"To maintain her ludicrous opposition to protecting the polar bear in the face of massive scientific consensus, Palin stepped over the line to lie about and suppress government science," Suckling said in a statement.

The irony is, of course, that John McCain was supposedly one of the few Republicans that actually got global warming.

He's proposed legislation – co-sponsored with Joe Lieberman – that would have put the U.S. on track to cut emissions.

And here he is nominating for his vice-president a woman who basically thinks climate change is some kind of liberal bogeyman cooked up by environmentalists.

In our view, McCain, in a desperate, last-ditch attempt to get elected, shoved Mother Earth under the bus.

And what does this all have to do with Arizona? Maybe more than you think. [Recent studies suggest](#) that we here in the desert may be more closely linked to the health of the Arctic sea ice than previously believed.

It seems that fluctuations in the sea ice may be linked to weather patterns in the Pacific Ocean. In particular, as sea ice declines, more storm systems from the Pacific may head north, bypassing the Southwest.

It does strike me as an interesting coincidence that the so-called Medieval Warm Period happened to coincide with the mega-drought in the Southwest that led to the fall of the Anasazi civilization.

In any case, fly, dodo, fly.

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