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WORLD ENERGY SHORTAGE TO CONTINUE PREDICTS SUSTAINABILITY AUTHOR, JOHN HOWE *

Sees Summer Gas at $3 Per Gallon – $10 to $20 Per Gallon within Ten Years

Recommends strong central planning and top down rationing throughout the nation to secure fair access to future dwindling supplies

New York – April 5, 2006 – In a recent interview, John Howe (Waterford, ME), a mechanical engineer and organic farming advocate, noted that we are living with the dangerous assumption that because oil has seemed to be increasingly plentiful during the past 100 years, it will continue to be so in the future. Mr. Howe is one of over 54 speakers from across the country who will share their views during the "Local Solutions to the Energy Dilemma" conference to be held in Manhattan, April 27-29 (see below).

Asserting, as many experts do, that we have reached the 'peak' in production of easily accessible oil, Mr. Howe said that oil production is already declining in many areas in the world, and it will become ever more difficult to obtain the oil we have come to depend on. "It just isn't true that technology can quickly switch gears and save us," he noted. "Forty years ago in the 1960's, global discovery of oil peaked, and every year, we've been discovering less and less. The trend in oil discovery has been downhill. That's one of the reasons why big companies such as Exxon Mobile prefer to buy up smaller companies with their proven resources, rather than gamble on making new finds."

Mr. Howe, was a presenter at the September 2005 conference on Peak Oil organized by Congressman Roscoe Bartlett (R-MD), founder of the Peak Oil Caucus in the House of Representatives. Mr. Howe is also the builder of a solar-powered concept car, and a solar-powered tractor proven on his Maine farm, and a frequent lecturer on sustainability and energy. He believes it will take at least fifty years of discipline and planning to adjust our current infrastructure to sources of sustainable energy such as solar, hydro and wind.

The positive side, says Mr. Howe, is that all this attention is bringing the issue of energy depletion out of the closet." He is referring in part to the 2006 State of the Union Address given by President Bush in which he stated that, 'we have a serious problem: America is addicted to oil…'"

"During the last 100 years we've ridden to the top of a bell curve of oil production and consumption," Mr. Howe noted. "The world was awash in oil with which we have built a huge infrastructure and an expanding population. Oil is part of nearly everything we take for granted: food – heat – industry - transportation. We assumed that just because oil has been abundant, it will always be abundant. It's just not going to happen. We are now at the peak of that curve – and many geologists, physicists, and scientists agree that we cannot continue. Geologists know that oil and natural gas are only found in a few specific places,

and we're running out of those places – we drill and drill and drill but don't find the big fields anymore – even though geo-physically we know where to look.

"We also know where the most plentiful supply of oil presently exists," said Jim Quigley, Ph.D, Operations Director of the Center for Sustainable Energy, Bronx Community College, CUNY, "and that is in the Middle East. The war presently in Iraq is not about just the issue of terrorism or expanding democracy. If Iraq's major export was bananas it's doubtful that we would be involved in a war in Iraq. How many more wars over this dwindling resource should we expect, before we're smart enough to develop the alternatives?"

The alternative fuel which tops Mr. Quigley's list is Hydrogen, which, he says could be derived from inexhaustible solar powered electricity. "There is enough sun light falling on a mere 10 percent of Arizona's land mass," he noted – "using existing solar technology - to supply the entire electrical demand of the United States. However," said Mr. Quigley, a past executive director of the New Jersey Higher Education Partnership for Sustainability - "there is not enough infrastructure. Which is why we should be using our resources to develop that infrastructure. What on earth are we going to do when the oil runs out? We know the oil is going to run out and we ought to be busying ourselves finding its replacement before its too late."

"While there is ongoing debate about whether hydrogen, ethanol, soy biodiesel, or other alternative fuels will be the most effective," notes Dan Miner, of Peak Oil NYC, "there is a broad consensus that extreme increases in conservation and efficiency in all areas of life will be essential initial steps while all energy alternatives are scaled up as part of a national emergency effort."

"The bottom line is that we're going to have to deal with permanently declining supplies of oil, and permanently increasing prices for oil and all fossil fuel based products, said Mr. Howe. "It's almost unfathomable what the results will be in our way of life. But based upon scientific inquiry, those changes are absolutely certain. It's just a question of when they begin taking effect, and how effectively we respond."

According to Mr. Howe, we must change behaviors dependent upon cheap oil such as commuting long distances, building 2000 square foot homes for small families, and driving vehicles that travel at 80 miles an hour while using a gallon of gasoline every 20 miles.

At this time of tightened supply Howe tells us that 1/8 of the world's petroleum goes to satisfy the US appetite for gasoline, equaling 400 million gallons per day. And yet, in order to substitute just 5% of our diesel fuel consumption with soybean-based bio fuels – it would take 30 million acres, or one tenth of our arable land. "You've got to put numbers to these things to understand that efficiency and conservation are vital to our response," he said. "Our kids will say. I can't believe what you did with that precious energy."

Mr. Howe, Mr. Quigley and other speakers at the Local Solutions to the Energy dilemma conference will discuss how New York City and the nation can respond to this challenge. For more information on the 'Local Solutions to the Energy Dilemma Conference," go to www.energysolutionsconference.org.

**Books by John Howe: The End of Fossil Energy and A Plan for Sustainability, First edition (2004); The End of Fossil Energy and The Last Chance for Sustainability, Second edition (2005); The End of Fossil Energy and The Last Chance for Survival, Third edition (2006) . www.mcintirepublishing.com*

See website for a list of confirmed speakers: www.energysolutionsconference.org

There will be a screening of "The Power of Community: How Cuba Survived Peak Oil," an inspiring documentary about the Cuban people's response to a national energy crisis.

Admission is available for 1, 2 and 3 days, with professional, student, senior, low-income, and group rates.

The conference is co-sponsored by Local Energy Solutions, L.L.C., the Five Borough Institute, and Peak Oil NYC.

For more information, list of confirmed speakers, and online registration, go to www.energysolutionsconference.org.

Contacts:
Philip M. Botwinick, Local Energy Solutions, 845.639.8304
Email: info@energysolutionsconference.org
Website: www.energysolutionsconference.org

Dan Miner, Peak Oil NYC, 917.319.2924.
Website: www.peakoilnyc.org