

Golden Gate Climate Update Transcript

Interview with Daryl Hanna

Actress, prominent environmental advocate

Interviewed on October 14, 2009

Craig Glassner interviewer

Part 2

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Craig - Hi, I'm Ranger Craig Glassner, and welcome to Golden Gate Climate Update, your source for information on climate change and sustainability.

This episode is a continuation of our interview with Daryl Hanna, actress and environmental advocate. But before we get back to the interview, here is the answer to our climate update challenge. If all of the US corn and soybean crops were converted to biofuels, 12 percent of America's gasoline needs would be met.

Now back to Daryl. I know some supporters of biodiesel are mainly supporting it because it is reducing our dependence on foreign oil. But clearly there are environmental advantages as well. Can you talk to that?

Daryl - Well biofuels, if they are made like I was talking about in a sustainable fashion, can be a closed loop system. You know, the same amount of carbon that comes out of your tail pipe is consumed by the plants as they are grown. So, in other words, it is not adding to our carbon intensive lifestyle that we are all leading right now. So that is one good advantage, another advantage is like I said, if biofuels are grown and harvested in the right way, first of all they can be done locally, they can be done even personally, you can do it yourself. Back in the day when everybody had a still in their back yard, it wasn't because they were all drinking thousands of gallons of alcohol every day. It was because they were using it for heating fuel, for cooking fuel, for driving fuel. So people can make fuel themselves, but also it can be produced locally. You don't have to ship it across the world. You don't have to get into wars for it. You don't have to drill or pillage all of our natural systems, but also there are ways to produce biofuels to get feed stocks that actually bioremediate our damaged natural systems.

Craig - Now, besides being a major proponent of biodiesel, I know you personally drive a biodiesel car, are there any other environmental projects that you are currently involved with that you would like to talk about?

Daryl - Well, just like I said, I tend to spend most of my time just sort of educating myself about what's going on and how we choose to deal with it, and see if maybe there is a better way, and try to educate myself about solutions because it can be kind of overwhelming when you look at all the scary stuff that is going on out there. It can be disheartening and so I think that focusing on solutions does me a lot of good. And so I try to do that. Right now I have been learning a lot about the way we produce coal in this country and helping to raise awareness about the people who are really affected by mountain top removal in the Appalachian Mountains, mostly in Kentucky and West Virginia, but it is all throughout the Appalachians, in Tennessee and other states, and basically a small percentage of our coal in this country is removed by actually blowing off the tops of mountains. Blowing off the tops of mountains, dumping the refuse, the rubble and everything into the valleys, crushing the streams and headwaters below in just an unnecessary way for us to be removing coal. It's a cheaper way for the coal companies, they still make a huge profit, they need less employees because they use so much dynamite, and then they leave behind like these devastated moonscapes. It doesn't make it any safer for the employees as well. They need less employees and it basically just devastates not only the mountain tops, but the entire ecosystem because it leaves behind these slurry ponds of cadmium and lead and arsenic and all other kinds of stuff. What would be another solution to that? Well trying to wean ourselves off coal as a fuel would be one good thing, and really moving forward on sustainable forms of energy; wind, solar, growing a lot of our own food and fuel regionally, rather than internationally or growing asparagus in California and shipping it to New York when it could be grown in New York better. You know, those kinds of things. It's just taking a step back and saying, you know, now we know better, let's make some wiser decisions.

Craig - Now, I know if any of our listeners are interested, they can go to your web site, which is dhlovelife.com, and you have a video blog there.

Daryl - Yeah.

Craig - You are also on twitter as dhlovelife. Are there any other resources that you might be able to recommend for our listeners, especially as far as biodiesel and biofuels goes?

Daryl - Biodiesel and biofuels; I just started an organization with Willie Nelson's wife, Annie, and with Kelly and Bob King from Pacific Biodiesel called the Sustainable Biodiesel Alliance, and actually we are having our first fundraiser in about a week here in southern California. But it is really going to be an accreditation organization, sort of like USDA Organic or something like that, which will help certify biodiesel and then we are going to try to move, once we get biodiesel taken care of, we are going to move into

ethanol, so we can get other biofuels as well. But to make it so that people will know what is actually sustainably produced, harvested and distributed versus what is causing problems.

Craig - Well Daryl, I want to thank you very much for joining us today, and you have a great afternoon.

Daryl - You're very welcome. Thank you ranger Craig.

Craig – Please join our next podcast, when we will be interviewing Dr. Anthony Westerling, professor and U. C. Merced about his research about wildfires and climate change. Until our next podcast this is ranger Craig. Thanks for listening.

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Male voice - Golden Gate Climate Update is produced by Will Elder and is a product of the Earth to Sky Program, an innovative partnership between the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and NASA.

Music from *A Walk in the Desert* by Electronic Symphonic