

Who is Philip Cooney?

And what does his story have to do with climate change?



TIME PERIOD	COONEY'S ACTIVITIES
1995-JANUARY 20, 2001	Cooney works for the American Petroleum Institute. His job is to represent the interests of oil companies.
JANUARY 20, 2001	When George Bush becomes president, his Administration hires Cooney to head the White House Council on Environmental Quality.
JUNE 8, 2005	Newspapers report that Cooney changed the wording of government reports on climate change to misrepresent the finding that greenhouse gases are the cause of climate change.

Sources: *An Inconvenient Truth*, Al Gore, 2006; *New York Times*, Andrew Revkin, 6-8-05; <www.dailykos.com>. Photo (top) of Philip Cooney testifying before Congress on March 19, 2007, by Ericka Ekstrom.

For Discussion

Are you surprised to learn about Philip Cooney's activities?

Why do you think Cooney changed the wording on government reports?

What type of experience should the head of the White House Council on Environmental Quality have?

Handwritten revisions and comments by Philip A. Cooney, chief of staff for the White House Council on Environmental Quality, appear on two draft reports by the Climate Change Science Program and the Subcommittee on Global Change Research. Mr. Cooney's changes were incorporated into later versions of each document, shown below with revisions in bold.

"STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE U.S. CLIMATE CHANGE SCIENCE PROGRAM," DRAFT TEXT, OCT. 2002

14 wetlands will expand in areas where meltwater resulting from deeper and longer thaw
 15 periods does not have a natural drainage path to the ocean.
 16
 17 Warming will also cause reductions in mountain glaciers and advance the timing of the melt
 18 of mountain snow packs in polar regions. In turn, runoff rates will change and flood
 19 potential will be altered in ways that are currently not well understood. **There will be**
 20 **significant shifts in the seasonality of runoff that will have serious impacts on native**
 21 **populations that rely on fishing and hunting for their livelihood. These changes will be**
 22 **further complicated by shifts in precipitation regimes and a possible intensification and**
 23 **increased frequency of extreme hydrologic events. Reducing the uncertainties in current**
 24 **understanding of the relationships between climate change and Arctic hydrology is critical**

Changes from previous version highlighted in bold.

PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT, NOV. 2002
 Warming could also lead to changes in the water cycle in polar regions. Reducing the uncertainties ...
 FINAL REPORT, JULY 2003
 The paragraph does not appear in the final report.

A sample paragraph from the report that Cooney edited.