



SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Earth and Climate Sciences

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Mr. Brian Stone, Acting Director
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Dear Director Stone, and all those responsible for the fate of NCAR,

Hey there, fellow human. I may not know you, but I know that one thing that you, I, and the other ~350 million Americans and ~8 billion humans on Earth have in common is that we are sitting in a bath of the same air, air that we use to make our muscles fire and our minds turn, air that squeezes our bodies to stop the pressure inside from exploding outwards, air that picks up water from the ocean and dumps it over our heads so that we can drink and grow food to eat, air that can come down upon us with ungodly destruction and punishing heat and cold, or fill our lungs with toxins and irritants.

There are so many differences in what we all might want out of this time we have alive. Our government guarantees us the pursuit of happiness, but my happiness and yours might not look the same, and we might disagree about whether to work together to become happy. But we all live in this air. What I learn about it can benefit you, and vice versa. Even if you find air boring, air that allows us to breathe, eat, drink, and remain physically intact - air that constitutes "good weather" - seems like a precondition for happiness. Anything that one of us learns about the air is something that 8 billion other people do not have to go and learn for themselves.

How great it is then, and what a glowing endorsement of humans, and the particular humans that make up the US, that we have the National Center of Atmospheric Research. What a sign of wisdom on our part, and on our country's part, that we have made an institution that helps us to protect ourselves against bad weather, to understand how our air moves and changes, that invents and maintains tools to measure the air, that builds software that helps us predict the weather and its properties in the near and far future, that provides computing power so that armies of scientists across the country at other institutions can grow our knowledge, that provides support for scientists learning how to make these forecasts, and that provides a place so that people who have to do the often challenging work of studying the air can gather and get to know each other and learn from each other.

I cannot imagine NCAR doing any of these tasks as well as it does if you remove any one of these pieces. Any dismantling will make each of us, on average, more at risk, dumber, and poorer.

Humans seem to be eternally torn between cooperating and trying to climb over each other. Given this, it now seems kind of inevitable that there would be an effort to dismantle NCAR, one of America's best examples of the usefulness of cooperation. In this skirmish, it can feel like we're all playing out our parts, game board pieces waiting to eventually be swept back into the box. Just know that if you're reading this, and you have any sort of decision power, and some part of you knows that NCAR is a good thing - you still have the power of choice. Your decisions are not a forgone conclusion. You can help protect against death and ignorance. You can keep NCAR whole.

Sincerely,

Jonah Bloch-Johnson